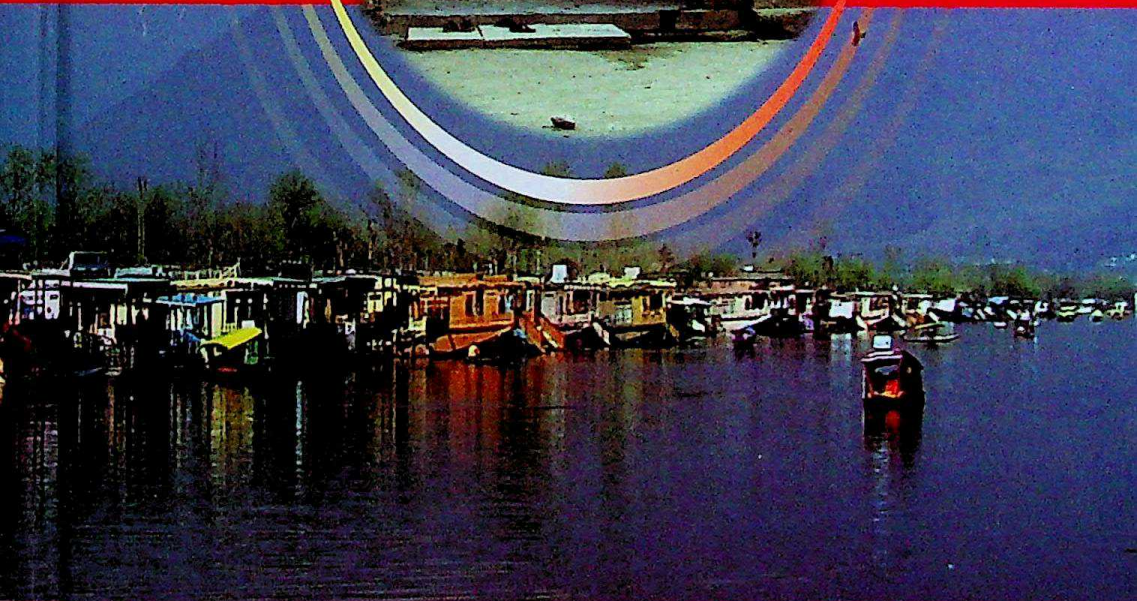
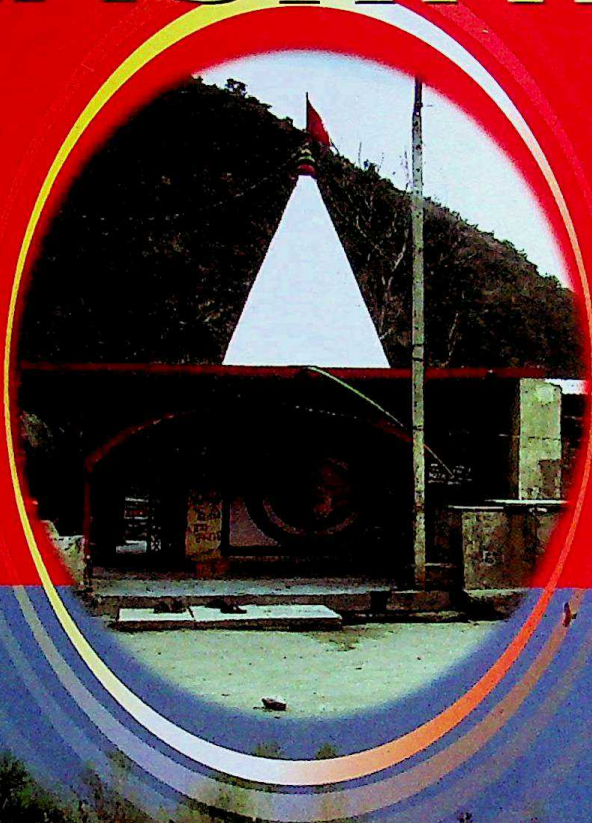


THE HISTORY OF ANCIENT KASHMIR



S. Luckvinder Singh Sodhi

THE HISTORY OF ANCIENT KASHMIR

In this study, we have given an emphasis on the socio-political, cultural history from the human settlement in Kashmir valley to the advent of Islamic rule in the valley. It also focus on the famous ruling dynasties and their political and socio-cultural achievement. This title has been classified in the comprehensive chapters

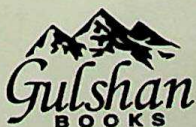
- (1) Pre-historic Kashmir,
- (2) The Karkota Empire,
- (3) Lalitaditya (724-762),
- (4) Social Economic and Cultural Development,
- (5) Loharas Dynasty,
- (6) Religious Development,

including bibliography.

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ANCIENT
KASHMIR

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S. Luckvinder Singh Sodhi



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PREFACE

The book titled the History of Ancient Kashmir would be source of information to the readers and scholars. An emphasis has been laid on the socio political History from the early human settlements in the Kashmir valley, till the advent of Islam in valley. To make the study proper the title has been classified in comprehensive chapters.

The first and second chapter of the book deals with pre-historic period of Kashmir and early settlements. A common legend about the origin of the valley that it had a vast in land lake formed of waters from melting ice and snow. The high mountains and peaks surrounding it. This mountain lake was called *satisaras* according to the tradition the *draineer* of this lake was an ascetic named *Kashyapa*. The reclaimed land was called *Kashyap-pur* or *kasyap-mar* and later called Kashmir. As per the *sanskrit* terminology *Kasimara*- the word *Kashmira* to make it easy is 1-Ka- which means water 2-Shimira *desicate* thus *Kashyapa* did settled the land of Kashmir. In the ancient Kashmir we are able to note *Paleolithic* the *Mesolithic* and *Neolithic* cultures. *Burzhama* is the famous megalithic site, 10 miles east of Srinagar. The information collected from the *Nilamatpurana* which mentions settling in the valley of the people who were both from the Southern and Northern region which includes *Ladakh*, *dardistan Tibet* and the plans of India. The people from the plains of India were not able to accommodate themselves to the climate of valley unbearable in winter, hence they preferred to withdraw to warmer regions. Another belief which is that the *Kashmiris* belonged to branch of race of Indo Aryan type as a fact is established by evidence of their language and their physical appearance. Thus started the rule of Kings during the ancient period we are going to a witness a Hindu rulers who ruled from time to time.

The third chapter deals with *Karkota* empire. *Durlabhavardanas* was the first ruler of the *Karkota* empire he ruled for a period of 36 years (625-661) A.D after *Durlabhavardanas* his son *Pratapadidia II* (661-771) A.D ascended the throne he founded a new town named *Partapura* presently known as *Tapar* 18 miles west from Srinagar. Recent excavations at this place unearthed foundations of large temples

and buildings among the great conquerors of *Karkota* dynasty was *Lalitaditya*.

Lalitaditya (724-762) A.D. he was the third son of *Partapditya II*. The former is chiefly known as the great conqueror, his reign of 38 years was marked by exploits and conquests like Alexander the great. *Lalitaditya* had a desire for world's conquest. He was not only a great soldier but a great ruler, he ushered an era of glory and prosperity in the Kingdom he was tolerant towards all schools of thought. *Lalitaditya* and his queens founded numerous towns which include the town of *Lalitapura* modern (*Latapur*) another town named as *Hishkpora* modern *Ushkar* he is said to have built a big *Vihara* and a Buddhist temple the two outstanding constructions of *Lalitaditya* which have made his name immortal and added a luster to the architectural abilities of *Kashmiris* which are the Temple of *Martand* and the city of *Parhispora*. Thus *Lalitaditya* must be regarded as the founder of not only of a short lived empire but also of six centuries of Kashmir Hindu art he was followed by a succession of weak kings

Another great name is of *Awantivarman* (855-883) A.D. his reign appears to have brought a period of prosperity, good will among the people the foundation of *Awantivarman* is the town of *Awantipora* at the site called *Visvaikasara* on the right bank of the *Vitsa* he got constructed the temple of *Shiva Avanteshvra* at *Awantipora*. A reason behind his success was able prime minister named as *Sura* wise administrator he got built *Suryapur* presently known as *Sopore*.

Next two chapters deal with the socioeconomic, cultural and artistic developments *Ashoka* had built the city of *Srinagar* which remained capital up to the 6th century. The houses were mostly built of timber there were no permanent bridges but the river was spanned by boat bridges. The *Rajdhani* a palace of Hindu rulers was most probably located just below the second bridge *Habba Kadal* on the left bank of river, with its landmark of *Hariparbat* and *Shankarcharya* hills the city was dotted with *Richy* endowed stone temples. The valley of *Kashmir* has from early times been divided into two great parts by the modern names of *Kamraz* and *Maraaz*. *Kamraz* comprises the part of the valley below *Srinagar* on both sides of *Vitasta* and *Maraz* the rest of the valley above *Srinagar*. The population of *Kashmir* comprised

of several castes among which *Brahamana Vasiyas, Sudras, Nisads, Kiratas*. Brahmins were however the privileged and the honored caste they were mostly the priests and teachers

The position of women in the Hindu Society was that the woman of Upper class received education. The woman enjoyed equal rights with men. It seems that *prepuberty* marriages were not in vogue. The dress of the people of the ancient Kashmir was that the men wind their garments round their middle then gather them under the Arm pits and let them fall down across their body right hanging to the right the robes of the woman fall down to the ground they completely cover their shoulders. The men wore caps on their heads with flower wreaths and jeweled *necklets*

The *Sovergenity* of the State lies in the king who is of divine and has absolute power the king depended on the assistance of his ministers. Proper judicial administration, district and village administration. Civil servants were called *Kayasthas*. Proper military organization, to meet the expenses of maintaining a large standing army as well as of civil servants the King resorted to taxation of various kinds as the economy of Kashmir depended mainly on agriculture. The revenue collected from the land was major income of the government. The major crop of valley was rice, maize pulses. Fruit cultivation was from the ancient times. Ancient Kashmir had far flung political and cultural contacts to different corners of India, Central Asia Tibet, China. Kashmir Exported its own products such as woolen goods Saffron and *Kuth* while goods were imported. There were many other industries which were source of employment of the fair proportion of the population. There were also sculptor wood workers potters and produced goods of leather and jewellery.

The next chapter consists about the *Loharas* dynasty. Kashem-Gupta was a ruler he was yet destined to influence materially the history of Kashmir during the next centuries by his marriage with Dida the daughter *Simbraja* chief of Lohra. This territory which has left its name to the present valley of Lohrin comprises the mountain districts adjoining with Poonch district. *Kashemagupta's* union with *Dida* brought Kashmir under the Lohara family. The king was so enamoured of his wife that people nick named him as Diddakshema. Later Dida played a eminent role as a mother as a queen as she ruled

from 981-1003 A.D

Kota Rani was the last Hindu ruler she was married to *Rinchan* after the death of Kota Rani the Hindu rule came to an end. Thus the new era of Islam started in the valley.

The last chapter deals with religious developments the earliest inhabitants of Kashmir as we come to know that before the Indo Aryan immigration the predominant was Naga or snake worship. Naga worship was the principal religion in Kashmir during the third and fourth centuries. There were some festivals connected with worship of Nags

Savism had been the predominant religion in Kashmir long before Buddhism was over shadowed by Savism in the 8th century as it had continue to remain the basic cult of People. Belief and attaining spiritual merit by concentration of large number of siva lingas. Many Shiva temples were built

Vaishnavism as Buddhism as savism the cult of Vaishnavism also flourished during the Karkota dynasty Vaishnavism not only received royal paronage as it was popular among the people many visnu temples were constructed

Buddhism was originally introduced by Ashoka the mighty muryan emperor of Magdha. Buddhism received a Filip and got royal patronage. Buddhism was encouraged by the Kaushan rulers. In Kasnishka's rule the forth Buddhist counsel was held in Kashmir.

Besides there were some other beliefs which include many Gods and *Godeses*, such as *Ganesa*, *Skinda* and *Surya*. Many images of *Ganesha* have been found called *Svayambu*.

In this work I have taken support from various sources which have become ready references. Proper and suitable bibliography is given with all chapters.

The need of getting the book published as I was inspired by my well wishers which include the *academicians*, my *colleagues* my *friends* and above all my family members.

I would like to pay my thanks to the Gulshan Publishers for giving shape to my material which is in the form of this book.

Luckvinder Singh

CHAPTER: 1

Prehistoric Kashmir

The literary evidences about the origin of the Valley are unanimous in referring to its having been a vast inland lake formed of the waters from the melting ice and snow on the high mountain peaks surrounding it. The gorge through which the river Vitasta at present escapes near Baramula was then blocked up, and the whole valley filled with what must have been the most lovely lake in the world. According to the Nilamatpurana, which is the oldest record of the legend, the lake was called Satisaras, the lake of Sati. In the period of the seventh Manu the demon Jalodhbhava ('water-borne'), who resided in the lake, caused great distress to all neighbouring regions by his devastations. The sage Kashyapa, the father of all Nagas, while on his pilgrimage in the north of India heard of the cause of this distress from his son Nila, the king of the Kashmir Nagas. The sage, determined to punish the evil-doer, proceeded to Brahma to implore his and other gods' help for this purpose. His prayer was granted. All the gods by Brahma's command started for Satisaras and took up their positions on the lofty peaks above Kaunsarnag. The demon who was invincible in his own element, refused to come forth from the lake. Vishnu, thereupon, called on his brother, Balabhadra, to drain the lake, which he did by piercing the mountain with his ploughshare. When the lake had dried up, Jalodhbhava was attacked by Vishnu and after a fierce combat was slain with His war-disc.

Kashyapa then settled the land, which had thus been produced.

The gods took up their abode in it, while the various goddesses adorned the land in the shape of rivers. At first the Naga tribe dwelt in it alone for six months of summer and for the other six months they lived with the Pisacas who withdrew with the coming of summer¹. Another version of the legend in Buddhistic form is alluded to by Heun Tsiang.² Its main features as related in the Nilamatpurna Live to this day in popular tradition. They are also reproduced in all Muhammadan abstracts of the Rajatarangini.³ From Malik Haider's Twarikh, the legend became known to Bernier and has since found its way into almost every account of Kashmir.⁴

Paleolithic Culture

Drew recognised clearly the true relation between the legend and those physical facts which seem to support the belief that Kashmir was in comparatively late geological times wholly or in great part occupied by a vast lake. "The traditions", he says, "of the natives—traditions that can be historically traced as having existed for ages—tend in the direction of the Vale having been occupied by a lake, and these have usually been considered to corroborate the conclusions drawn from the observed phenomena. Agreeing as I do with the conclusion, I cannot count the traditions as perceptibly strengthening it; I have little doubt that they themselves originated in the same physical evidence that later travellers have examined."⁵

The geological observations upon which modern scientific inquiries have based their belief as to the former existence of a great lake, are the undoubted lacustrine deposits found in the karewas or plateaus in the Valley. These deposits though of no remote date, speaking by geological standard, are far older than any monuments of man that have yet been discovered.

Prehistoric

Whether man ever saw the lovely Satisaras, is not yet possible to say. Prehistoric explorations in the Valley have revealed the occurrence of the Quaternary Glacial Cycles. The lacustrine deposits called karewas are geological formations of the Ice Age. These overlay the terminal

moraines of the first glaciations and are comprised of two groups, lower and upper, differentiated by the moraines of the second glaciation. No Paleolithic tool has, however, been found in the Valley so far, and human occupation in Pleistocene Kashmir is still to be proved.⁶

The Mesolithic or the proto-Neolithic period appears to be indicated by the findings of De Terra and Paterson in the Jhelum valley of Kashmir "of great numbers of artificially flaked stones among which were flaked cores reminiscent of Paleolithic technique." But in all these places it was certain that the flakes were associated with pottery-bearing layers of either Neolithic or historic date.⁷

Burzahom

The Neolithic culture is indicated by the discovery of ground and polished stone axes, hoes and pestles and bone implements, at the well known Menhir site of Burzahom 16 kilometres east of Srinagar. Burzahom is famous as one of the two megalithic sites in the extreme north-west of the Indian sub-continent. It has thrown considerable light on the pre- and proto-historic period in Kashmir. The Archaeological Survey of India who began excavations here in 1960, discovered pits in section near about the silt-bed, indicating a settlement of early pit-dwellers. This is perhaps the only known find of such settlement in India and indications are that more valuable data will be found when extensive surface diggings are taken up.

Who were these people living in pits and using polished stone and bone tools? These are questions to which nobody has as yet hazarded a guess. Much more work is needed before firm conclusions can be drawn as regards the date and historical significance of these Neolithic and chalcolithic people; even so it will be of value to state the problems and indicate the general direction to which the evidence points.

Archaeological Evidence

Large-scale investigations of archaeological sites in Central Asia and Northern India reveal a certain typographical affinity between their cultures going as far back as the Old Stone Age. The movement

of ideas and people over Central Asia to Northern India and back can now be traced to Old Stone Age, and does not begin only from the second century B.C. Further, this was a continuous process seen through the major pre-and proto-historic periods. The Soan culture of Northern India has established that the original habitat of the Old Stone Age man in India was in the Himalayan foothills-the Siwalik formations traversed by the Indus system from the Peshawar valley in Pakistan to the Kangra valley in India.

Similarly excavations in Central Asia have revealed that the original habitat of the Old Stone Age man in that region was in the low ranges of the Pamirs, the Gissar, Babatag, and Zarafshan, traversed by the Amu and Syr rivers and their tributaries from southern Kazakhstan to Tadjikistan⁷ Geographically, the two areas are contiguous, a factor that must have facilitated physical and cultural contacts of people in these regions. Recent researches in both the areas have, in fact, thrown some welcome light in this direction. We are now in a position to visualise not only a parallel and similar development of the Old Stone Age cultures in India and Central Asia but also their occasional contacts. What the nature of such contacts was can only emerge in coming years when more work is done. At present our analysis is based upon tool typology alone.

Neolithic Culture

With further human cultural development a closer affinity is found between the men living in the two regions during the Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods. There is clear evidence to this effect available from the excavations in Northern India and Central Asia.

The Neolithic period marks the appearance of a momentous change. During the period we find the emergence of effective village farming communities. There are distinct traits of food production, stock raising, grinding of tools and manufacture of pottery.

Later during the Chalcolithic period, we find man engaged in trade following his acquisition of knowledge of metallurgy, which entailed securing of raw materials, sale or barter of finished products and surplus food. The self-sufficiency and isolation of the Neolithic villages was thus broken and conditions were ripe for the movement

of both ideas and people.

Fortunately some remarkable Neolithic and Chalcolithic sites have been excavated at several places in India. These have been designated as Southern, Eastern and Northern Neolithic cultures. Of the three it is the Northern Neolithic culture exemplified by the sequence at Burzahom, which has a distinctive assemblage. This singles it out from the other two Neolithic cultures in India.

After a close study of the objects unearthed at Burzahom, two phases of occupation have been recognised. In Phase I, the beginning of which is dated to about 2300 B.C., the material culture included: (i) coarse grey or black burnished pottery, often with mat impressed bases; (ii) bone tools including awls, needles and harpoons; (iii) packed and ground stone axes; and (iv) ring tools. The inhabitants lived in pits dug into the *karewa* soil.

In Phase II, which seems to have continued till about 1400 B.C., the pit dwellings gave place to structures built on ground.

Other innovations included the introduction of the potter's wheel. Towards the end of the phase came the knowledge of metallurgy — a single arrowhead of copper and pierced rectangular or semi-lunar knives known as harvesters. To this phase also belong human and animal burials. The absence of stone blade industry throughout the two phases of occupation is significant.⁸

Central Asia

Neolithic culture sites have been found in Central Asia. Lou-lan, a site located on the international trade route in the Tarim basin of Chinese Central Asia and a few other sites in the Lop Nor desert have yielded these cultures. The characteristic traits of the assemblage include the presence of: (i) blades, including fluted cores; (ii) ground stone axes, including perforated ones and adzes, chisels, etc; and (iii) handmade pottery of two varieties, black and grey.

The Neolithic cultures of Tadzhikistan consist of three main cultural complexes, namely, (i) the Djeitum culture, (ii) the Keltminar culture, and (iii) the Gissar culture.

Most of the traits of the Burzahom sequence, namely, lunar knives, pit dwellings, perforated celts, are paralleled on sites in Central and

Northern China.

It would be seen that the similarity between the assemblages of Northern Neolithic culture of India, exemplified by Burzahom sequence and the Neolithic culture in Central and North China as in Tadjikistan and Uzbekistan would have resulted from the movement of people and culture into the sub-continent from the north, most probably through the passes connecting these areas⁹. In studying the spread of Neolithic culture, the geographical and ecological background and the various stimuli, for example, population pressure, search for new land, etc, have to be taken into consideration.

Periodic Movement of Tribal People

Hence the origin of the Pisaca legend as given in the *Nilamatpurana* and referred to by Kalhana may be attributed to the stimuli mentioned above. The legend relates to an early periodic movement of tribal people from Central Asia to the Kashmir Valley. The following interesting statement about the inhabitants of Rupsu would apply to these early nomad settlers in the Valley: "Further east (of Padar) across the glaciers lies the inaccessible country of Zanskar where the people and cattle live indoors for six months out of the year, where trees are scarce and foot is scarcer. Farther east is Rupsu, the lowest point of which is 13,500 feet In Rupsu live the nomad Champas, who are able to work in an air Extraordinary rarity and complain bitterly of the heat of Lch(1 1,500. feet)

It refers to the occupation of the Valley after the desiccation of the lake Satisaras by the Nagas. It is difficult to identify the Nagas, "as they are still behind the veil of myth and legend, peeping out at one time as reptile snakes, and at another as human beings." It is no surprise that different theories have been put forth by different scholars on their identification. However, the view is now veering round to their being a tribe, may be pre-Aryan who inhabited the mountain tracts of north-west India, particularly Kashmir. They were probably called Nagas after the serpent deities they worshipped, just like the worshippers of Visnu, Siva and Sakti are even now called Vaisnavas, Saivas and Saktas. According to James Fergusson, the Nagas were not originally serpents but serpent worshippers. Dr C.F. Oldham is of the

opinion that the Nagas claimed descent from the sun and had the hooded serpent for a totem. K.R. Subramaniam in his *Origin of Shaivism* Mentions that the Naga is mixed with the cult of Saivism, and it is claimed that South Indian Saivism migrated to Northern India, leaving in the south its remnants in the Nagaras, or Nayars. Further, the tribes of Nagas had powerful Kingdoms in different part of India.

The most plausible suggestion is that the Nagas were the aboriginals inhabiting Kashmir before the advent of Vedic Aryans. The latter fought with them and the Pisacas and pushed them to the south, east and west. But ultimately the Pisacas from central Asia' began to swoop down into the Valley, particularly during the cold season when the Valley was comparatively warm. Described as short-statured and ugly men from the north, they used to return to their homeland with the approach of summer. It can be surmised that the Pisacas were the Chalcolithic tribes from Sinkiang who moved towards Kashmir in search of better land and climate. The location of a Neolithic site on the trade route to India from Sinkiang coincides with the annual wars fought against them by what we may call the "Kashmiri Pisacas" who separated from their homeland earlier would not tolerate fresh incursions from that quarter.

The Nilamatpurana mentions that the relations between the Nagas and Pisacas improved with the passing of time. But when there began an influx of Aryans from the Punjab, the situation changed. For the Nagas preferred the Aryans to the Pisacas and with their help they ultimately succeeded in throwing them back to their mountain habitats. A similar fate awaited the Nagas who were slowly either driven out or assimilated by the Vedic Aryans.

We are now left with the identification of the Manavas or men of the Nilamatpurana who entered and settled in the Valley, and ultimately dominated over the aborigines, the Nagas and the Pisacas. Dr. Grierson had advanced an erroneous theory that they were the Aryans who formed a part of the stream of Indo-Aryans but did not share the migration to India via the Kabul-river valley to settle in the Punjab. They broke away from the mainstream while crossing the Hindukush and entering the Valley via Dardistan and settled there in.¹⁰

NOTES

1. A detailed extract of the Nilamatpurana story has been given by Buhler in Report p.39.
2. Si-u-ki, trans. Beal, p. 149.
3. Ain-I-Akbari, ii- - 380; Wilson's Essay, p. 93
4. Bernier Travels, ed. Constable, p. 393.
5. Sunil Chandra Ray, *Early History and Culture of Kashmir*, p.190
6. De Terra and Paterson, *Studies on the Ice Age in India*, pp. 230 and 310-11
7. H. De Terra, "Excavations at Burzuhom", *Miscellanea of the American Philosophical Society*, 1936.
8. S.P. Gupta, *India and Central Asia in the Old Stone Age*, p. 15
9. *Imperial Gazetteer, Vol. XV* p. 73.
10. *Linguistic Survey of India. Vol. II-part 2*

CHAPTER: 2

*Early History of
Settlement*

Briefly speaking, the earliest stream of Aryans who entered India, found the banks of the river Saraswati in the Punjab fertile and conducive to easy cultivation, and settled there. Described in the Rig-Veda as "the mother of rivers, scholars have debated for centuries whether Saraswati is a myth or has been a reality at some distant point of time.

Fortunately a team of archaeologists, geologists, geographers and historians led by the famous archaeologist Dr V.S. Wakankar, began their quest of the river in 1985. Armed with high-tech facilities like land sat and multi-spectral scanner (MSS), the team began the quest from the believed source of the river at Adi Badri in the Siwalik Hills in Ambala. They sieved through the whole area notably 150 prominent sites along the route in the Thar desert ending at Somnath in Gujarat.

At the end of it all they had solid evidence to prove the existence of a highly developed culture on the banks of a mighty river, which they say was Saraswati. Apart from this evidence, the existence of a mighty river, matching the Vedic description of Saraswati, has been scientifically proved. The multi-spectral scanner, a widely used and relied-upon equipment in archaeology, indicates various channels of the river in the region. According to MSS observations of various channels, Sutluj was the main tributary of Ghaggar (the present name for Saraswati, now in Pakistan). But tectonic movements forced Sutluj

to flow in a different direction (at right angle to its original channel), thus leaving Ghaggar dry.¹ A study of the land sat imagery of Ghaggar (Saraswati) reveals that the river had a constant width of six to eight kilometers from Shatrana in the Punjab to Marot in Pakistan. The waters of the river spread prosperity all around and the settlers passed centuries there in peace, building well-planned towns and cities to live in. The Aryan society was by and by stratified into classes according to the kind of their work and profession or Varna. But as ill-luck would have it, the life-giving river changed its course several times and ultimately dried up. Known as Sarswat Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaisas, they left the Punjab in search of equally good if not better land in the rest of the sub-continent. An enterprising batch went back to the mountains in the north to reside in the Kashmir Valley, of whose beauty and salubrious climate they had heard from their forefathers who used to go there during summer but were driven out by the indigenous inhabitants—the Nagas and Pisacas. They sought the protection of Nila, the Lord of the Nagas and begged his permission to settle in the Valley permanently as his subjects.

Nila listened to their tale of woe sympathetically, but promised the requested permission on condition that they conformed to the social usages and customs of the Nagas. The Sarswats agreed to these conditions when the Naga chief permitted them to reside permanently in the Valley.

The first noteworthy mass immigration took place when Emperor Asoka brought 5,000 Buddhist monks and settled them in Kashmir to popularise the Hinayana Buddhism in Kashmir and adjacent territories. He built several maths and viharas and gifted the Valley to the Sangha, as he thought Kashmir was an ideal place for pursuing higher studies and spiritual practices.² Asoka's introduction of Buddhism naturally changed the entire social fabric in Kashmir. The caste-system that the Sarswats had brought with them was slowly discarded by the common people. The scholars and Pandits pursued Buddhist studies and were responsible for giving to the religion a new interpretation altogether—Mahayana. It was later carried to distant lands — Central Asia, Tibet, China, Japan and other regions. In return, students and savants from those lands came in large numbers

EARLY HISTORY OF SETTLEMENT • 11

to study in Kashmir and most of them settled in the Valley.

Several races entered into Kashmir later. There is historical evidence to the settlement of immigrants from Persia, Greece and Turkistan, the latter coming before and during Kaniska's rule. Tibetans also seem to have come in considerable numbers.

Kashmir behind its mountain ramparts, cut off from its neighbours, enjoyed immunity from foreign aggression, and hence people from other regions swarmed here to seek protection from invaders. Alberuni says: "The victory of the Punjab by Muhammad Ghazni made people fly away to places where our hands cannot yet reach — to Kashmir, Banaras and other places."³

With the advent of Islam there was an influx of a large number of Sufis and Sayyids. More than 700 of his followers were settled in Kashmir by Shah Hamadan in the 14th century, to be followed by a larger influx of Sayyids from Central Asia and Persia during and after Timur's invasion of northern India.⁴ Coming as they did from the line of the Prophet, they were treated with great respect by the Muslim kings and their subjects. But their control of the administrative machinery resulted in their oppression of the people who mustering strong under the banner of Malik Tazi Bhat inflicted severe defeats to them and finally drove them out of the Valley. However, many Sayyids preferred to stay behind to live as peaceful citizens. Excepting the Kashmiri Pandits who in the face of heavy odds, maintained their distinct identity, the purity of race, which has often been noted as distinguishing the great mass of the population of Kashmir, may be admitted with a qualification. It is probably due not only to the isolated nature of the Valley, but also to the curious faculty of absorbing foreign elements. Colonies of Mughals, Pathans, Punjabis, and Paharis settled within comparatively recent times in the Valley have been amalgamated with remarkable rapidity through inter-marriage and other means.

The ethnography of the regions surrounding the Valley can be traced clearly from the Rajatarangini. In the south and west the adjacent hill regions were occupied by the Khasas. Their settlements extended in a semicircle from Kishtwar in the south-east to the Jhelum valley in the west. The hill states of Rajauri and Poonch were held by Khasa

families; the dynasty of the latter territory succeeded to the rule of Kashmir in the 11th century. North of the Jhelum valley and as far as Muzaffarabad we find the Bombas as the neighbours of Khasas (later Khakhas), to whom they are closely related. It is probable that Karnah district was held by them already in old times. The upper Kishenganga valley above the famous shrine of Sarada was in old days already, as at present, peopled by Dards who are often referred to by Kalhana as the neighbours of Kashmir on the north. Their seats extended then, too, probably much further to the north-west, where they are now found in Chitral, Yasin, Gilgit and the intervening region towards Kashmir. Megasthenes already knew them in the Upper Indus regions. Kalhana relating events of his own time speaks of Malechhas further to the north. These might have been Muhammadanised Dards on the Indus and beyond. The regions immediately to the north-east and east of Kashmir were held by the Bhauttas. These are the modern Bhutta of Dras, Ladakh and the neighboring districts.⁵

The Rajatarangini

It is amidst the sketches of early settlements in the Valley that Kalhana begins *ajatarangini* or the 'River of Kings', with an invocation to Lord Siva in His manifestation as Lord Ardhnarishvara. This form of invocation is significant showing as it does the dominance in the 12th century A.D of the Saiva school of philosophy, originally founded by Vasagupta and developed by scholars like Somananda, Utpalacharya, Abhinavagupta and others.

In his introductory verses he eulogises the services of preceding historians who by recording past events and personalities had rendered a great service to posterity. From a study of these records future generations are able to draw moral and political lessons of immense value. He also makes a mention of the sources of his history. He particularly deplors the loss of detailed records on account of Suvrata's condensed historical sutras. Students generally chose the easier path of committing this digest to memory in preference to a study of detailed and exhaustive history, with the result that the latter was neglected and lost.

He then mentions II historical works extant at the time and critically examines their merit. He details other historical data, such as old coins, dedicatory notices, inscriptions on temples and on other religious endowments, which he made use of to check and elucidate the events recorded by earlier historians. Coming to the subject proper, Kalhana extols the merits of Kashmir and lists five features for which it was famous: Learning, lofty houses, saffron, icy water and grapes; things that even in heaven are difficult to find are common there."

That Kashmir was from ancient times the seat of Sanskrit literature is borne out by the testimony of Heun Tsiang, who visited the Valley five centuries earlier. The people of Kashmir," he writes, "love learning and are well cultured. Since centuries learning has been held in great reverence in Kashmir." During the course of the past 2,000 years Kashmiri scholars and poets produced works on philosophy, poetry, drama, rhetoric, grammar, poetics and folklore.

The grand ruins of ancient temples dotting the Valley are sufficient evidence of the qualities of Kashmiris as architects and sculptors. During Muslim rule also, when timber replaced stone as the chief building material, Kashmiris distinguished themselves by constructing lofty houses. Mirza Haider Dughlat (1540 AD) in his *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* admires the skill of Kashmiri craftsmen in the art of building. He specially mentions, "Lofty buildings constructed of fresh cut pine." Most of these were five story's high. The beauty of their exterior defied description and "all who behold them for the first time, bite the finger of astonishment with the teeth of admiration."

From ancient times saffron has been a monopoly of Kashmir and therefore it is called *Kashmiraja* in Sanskrit. Kalhana goes on to name certain *tirthas* and springs which bestowed holiness on Kashmir. Most of those can be located even today and are held in great veneration by the Kashmiris. The reference to the Nagas is particularly interesting. According to the popular belief in Kashmir, these are considered to be snakes living in the waters of springs and lakes over which they keep guard. They also appear in human form or as clouds or hailstorms. To this day springs are generally called Nag in Kashmir.

The Vitasta and its source, Nilakunda, have also been mentioned. Vitasta, which serves as the highway from the south to the north of

the Valley, is the chief river and supplies through canals and streams water for the irrigation of most of the paddy land. It is but natural that a feeling of reverence amounting to worship should have prevailed among the people for this river. The author of the *Vitasta Mahatmya* thus sings its praise:

*The righteous declare this terrestrial
globe as the best of the triad
(as in this one can practice
penances and attain salvation),
Of that, too, the mountain (Himalayas),
chosen by the Mother of the Three Worlds)
(Parvati) to take her birth in:
Of that, too, the country of Kashmir —
The abode of blessings, free from all calamities —
Through this country thou, O Vitasta,
flowest benefiting the people (and)
I offer unto thee my salutation."*

It is difficult to judge critically the value of Kalhana's account of the kings who came before Asoka, for there is no independent supporting evidence forthcoming either from within or from the neighbouring territories of Kashmir. In discussing these kings he seems to have followed and explained the local names of kings, real or imaginary, and these continue to influence Kashmir's popular traditions to the present day.

The history of the Valley has been considerably influenced by the relations, which Kashmir had from an early date with the Punjab and other hill states by virtue of the community of race, religion and culture and at times political dependence. But unfortunately the knowledge about the early history of these territories is fragmentary and in need of critical study. Hence it is difficult to make out anything resembling an exhaustive treatment of the political and cultural development of the Valley from the early part of the Chronicle. Kalhana begins the Chronicle with an account of King Gonanda I, whose initial year of reign he placed in 653 Kali, the traditional date of the coronation of King Yudhisthira, the Pandava leader.

What Kalhana has to tell us of Gonanda I and his three successors

is that he was one of the relations of Jarasanda, the king of Magadha. He was a good and just king. When Jarasanda was in battle with Krishna on the banks of the Yamuna, Gonanda at the head of a large army went to his aid and besieged Krishna in a fortress. His men fought bravely for a long time but they were routed and he himself was killed by Balabhadra, the brother of Krishna.

After his death his son, Damodra, sat on the throne. Filled with ideas of revenge for his father's death, he waited until Krishna and the other scions of Yadu visited Gandhara on the Indus on the occasion of the Svayamvara of the King's daughter. Damodra led an expedition against him, and attacked Krishna. He fought bravely but was killed. His wife Yasovati who was then enceinte was made the queen-regent of Kashmir at Krishna's advice.

Here Kalhana casually remarks that the nobles and advisers grumbled that a woman had been crowned queen. But Lord Krishna appeased them by reciting the following verse from the Nilamatpurana:

*"Kashmir is Parvati; know that its king is
a portion of Siva. Though he be wicked,
a wise man who desires his own prosperity
will not despise him."*

This calmed the turbulent nobles who thereafter treated Yasovati like a goddess and as 'the mother of the subjects'. When the queen bore a son, he was named Gonanda II and crowned king in his infancy. About this time the Great War of the *Mahabharata* had started and as Gonanda II was young his assistance was not sought by either the Kauravas or the Pandavas. This explains the absence of any mention of the country and its ruler in the accounts of the 'Great War'.

'Lost Kings'

Kalhana then abruptly says that after Gonanda II, "thirty-five kings who follow him have been immersed in the ocean of oblivion, their names and deeds having perished through the destruction of the records."

Kalhana, taking up the narrative, mentions the names of eight more kings, namely, Lava, Kusha, Khagendra, Surendra, Godhara,

Suvarna, Janaka and Sachinara, who had preceded Asoka. As already mentioned most of these names are associated with the founding of towns and villages, some of which can still be traced. But nothing is known about the historicity of any of them.

Achaemenian and Greek Invasions

The *Rajatarangini* gives no detailed and authentic information about conditions prevailing in Kashmir and the adjoining regions of north-western India during the pre-Asoka period. But some fragmentary records in Sanskrit of the later Vedic period and notices with regard to Achaemenian and Greek invasions of India show that Kashmir formed a part of Gandhara, the eastern region of Afghanistan.

In the later Vedic period the Brahmanas and the Upanishads mention Gandhara extending on both sides of the Indus with Taxila (Rawalpindi district) and Pushkaravati (modern Charsada, Peshawar) as its principal towns, and in the oldest Buddhist writings it is mentioned that there were 16 great powers (*Solasa mahajanapadas*), which must have existed in the seventh or the early sixth century B.C. The 16th on the list is Gandhara, that is eastern Afghanistan, with its capital at Pushkaravati and also including Kashmir (*Kashmira Gandhara*).⁶

The north-western part of India seems to have been divided in the latter half of the sixth century B.C. into a number of petty principalities, and there was no great power to curb their mutual strifes and jealousies. Naturally it provided a strong tempting ground to the imperialism of the Achaemenian monarchy, which had risen in Persia about this time under the leadership of Cyrus (C 558-30 B.C.). From the accounts of the Greek historians, the Persian king Cyrus appears to have subjugated the Indian tribes of the Paropanisus and the Kabul valley, especially the Gandharians.⁷ In the Behistan inscription of Darius, Gadara, that is, Gandhara is mentioned as one of the provinces of his empire. His immediate successors were too busy with affairs in the west to think of the east, but Darius I (522-486 B.C.) appears to have annexed a portion of the Indus region some time after 518 B.C.

It is learnt from Herodotus how Darius I sent an expedition some

time in 517 B.C. under Skylax of Koryanda to explore the possibility of a passage to the sea from the mouths of the Indus to Persia and in that connection mentions Kaspapyros as a city of the Gandharians. It is therefore not unlikely that Kashmir came for some time under the sway of the Achaemenids.

It is significant for the isolated position, which its mountain barriers assured to Kashmir that there is no direct mention of the kingdom in the records of Alexander's invasion. The march from Taxila to Jhelum took the Macedonian forces along a line of route, which lay comparatively near to the confines of Kashmir. Yet there is no notice in the accounts of Alexander's invasion, which can be assumed to imply even a hearsay knowledge of the Kashmir Valley. All we can glean from a reference here and there is that the Valley seems to have been then under the rule of the chief of Abhisaras (Poonch and Nowshera districts).

About the beginning of the spring of 326 B.C. Alexander crossed the Indus somewhere near Ohind (modern Und, near Attock). He was welcomed at Taxila by Omphis or Ambhi, with rich and attractive presents. Gratified at these gifts Alexander returned them, adding his own, and this won not only the loyalty of the ruler of Taxila but also a contingent of 5,000 soldiers from him. Abhisares, the astute king of Abhisaras (Poonch and Nowshera), who probably held Kashmir Valley as well, surrendered to Alexander of his own accord, thinking that resistance would be of no avail.⁸

At the end of the campaign Alexander made proper arrangements for keeping the conquered parts of the Punjab under his subjection. He placed his new ally, Porus, in charge of all the tract between the Beas and the Jhelum and over 15 republican nations with more than 5,000 cities; and Ambhi of Taxila was given full jurisdiction over the territories west of the Jhelum. Likewise, the ruler of Abhisaras had his authority extended over Kashmir with the State of Arsaces (Urusa-Hazara district) added to his kingdom.⁹ And as a counterpoise to the rule of these Indian princes, Alexander stationed adequate Greek garrisons in cities founded by himself on Indian soil.

With the departure of Alexander, a new power was rising in India. Slowly and patiently Chandragupta Maurya was extending his kingdom

of Magadha. Northern India was in a state of ferment about the beginning of the last quarter of the fourth century B.C. In the Punjab, particularly, the people, divided as they were, smarted under the blows of Alexander's viceroys and Chandragupta did not find it difficult to organise the tribes which had not reconciled themselves to the Greek yoke. As a result of his treaty with Seleukos, and on the latter's withdrawal to the west, Chandragupta got all the satrapies of north-western India, including Gandhara, where at the time of Alexander's invasion he had been residing as a student at university town of Taxila.¹⁰

During his successor, Bindusara's reign there was a revolt in Taxila and when Susima, his eldest son and viceroy, could not quell the disturbance, Bindusara transferred Asoka from Ujjain, and the latter succeeded in restoring order there.

Emperor Ashoka in Kashmir History

With Ashoka we come to firm historical ground. Kalhana's account of this great king, though scanty, is of special interest. In spite of a number of surmises to the contrary, there is a consensus of opinion among the historians that the Asoka of Kashmir history was the Emperor Asoka of Magadha whose dominions extended eastward to Bengal and westward to Hindukush.

The doubt has been caused by the system of chronology followed by Kalhana, according to which Asoka has been placed in 1182 BC. Asoka's date is fortunately one of the most authenticated in early Indian history as falling in the middle of the third century B.C. and if we give credence to Kalhana's chronological calculations, we should have to place him 900 years before his time. It would be interesting here to examine and test the accuracy of chronology followed in the early parts of the *Rajatarangini* with regard to this first point of contact between Kalhana's narrative and the ascertained facts of general Indian history.

Kalhana takes as the starting point of his chronological calculations the traditional date indicated by Varahmihra's *Brihatsambhita* for the coronation of Yudhisthira, the Pandava hero of the epics, namely, 653 of the Kali era or 3100 B.C. He rerecords his chronology according

to *Laukika* or *Saptarshi* era, which is still in current use among the Brahmin population of Kashmir. The commencement of this era is placed on Caitra Shudi first of Kali Sambat 25 (expired) or the year 3076-75 B.C.

The contents of Kalhana's history divide themselves into two great portions from the point of view of the critical tests, which can apply to them as historical records. Book I to III which contain a narrative of the earlier epoch is a record of successive Gonandiyā dynasties whose rule is supposed by Kalhana to have filled an aggregate period of nearly 3,050 years. The persons and events, which figure in them, can rarely be traced in other sources and these too only with considerable variations as to date and character. The narrative of Books IV to VIII which extends from the beginning of the Karkota dynasty (seventh century AD) to Kalhana's own time, can be, however, checked in many important points by independent evidence from other sources, such as coins, inscriptions and notices of Indian and foreign writers.

In regard to the chronological information contained in the *Rajatarangini* it is essential to note that there is a marked difference between the forms in which this information is conveyed in the earlier, and in the later portions. In the earlier portion we have no chronological data except such as may be deduced from the stated length of individual reigns and a few general figures. On the other hand, we find that from the concluding part of the Fourth Book onwards, the dates of accession of individual rulers and of other events of political or economic importance for the kingdom are indicated by the quotation of the exact years of *Laukika* era, coupled in most cases with equally precise statements of the month and date.

Both with regard to the assumption of 2,268 years as the aggregate length of Gonanda I and his successors as detailed in Book I, and 2,330 years of the aggregate duration of reigns from Gonanda III to his own date, Kalhana's chronology presents several inaccuracies which become glaring after a closer study of the text itself. For instance, the average length of reigns of 37 princes of the first three dynasties are 48 years and the average reigns of princes of Book II and III come to 32 and 59 years respectively, which is apparently too high, particularly when the average rule of kings of the later period does not exceed 12

years. In Book III Kalhana gives fully 300 years to king Ranaditya's rule.

With regard to Kaniska and Mihirakula, the two kings, whose respective identity with the famous Kusan ruler of northern India and with the White Hun or Ephthalite ruler of that name, has been established, Kalhana's chronology does not stand a critical test. For, Kaniska according to his calculation would be placed not less than 1,100 years and Mihirakula fully 1,200 years before their time.

From all this, it appears that with regard to early history of Kashmir as narrated by Kalhana, the chronology is not only defective but misleading. Several well-known scholars have devoted their attention to a study of Kalhana's chronology of the *Rajatarangini* particularly in the light of recent archaeological and numismatic discoveries, but so far nothing helpful has come out. We may, therefore, assume the conclusions arrived at by Dr Stein in 'his respect and accept Asoka — described in the *Rajatarangini* as being the follower of Buddha's religion who built stupas and viharas, a fact corroborated by the statement of Heun Tsiang in the seventh century AD — as the great Asoka of Indian history.

So it was early in his life that Asoka came in contact with Kashmir. Kalhana's brief reference to his building activities in the Valley, however, indicate that his stay was quite prolonged and it may safely be inferred that he paid regular periodic visits to the beautiful Vale.

Kalhana credits him with the foundation of Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir, with "ninety-six thousand dwelling houses resplendent with prosperity." He also built numerous viharas and stupas, particularly in the vicinity of Sukseletra¹¹ and Vitastatra¹². In the Dharmaranya Vihara at the latter place, he built a Caitya so high "that the eye could not see the extent of its height".¹³ He built a massive stone wall round the famous Vijayeshwara temple after dismantling the old stucco enclosure and within it built two temples dedicated to Siva under the name of Ahokeswara.¹⁴ He is credited with having propitiated by a fast Lord Bhuteswara¹⁵ at the famous shrine. This is fully in keeping with what from other evidence we conclude, as to Asoka's attitude towards other great religious systems, that he figures in Kashmir record also as the benefactor of the ancient and famous shrine of

Vijayeswara, and a worshiper at the Siva shrine at Bhutesa.

By far the most important event connected with Asoka's reign was the introduction of Buddhism in Kashmir. At the conclusion of the deliberations of the Buddhist Council held at Patliputra under the presidentship of Moggaliputta Tissa, Majjhantika was sent to Kashmir and Gandhara at the head of an evangelical mission. Heun Tsiang and Ou-kong mention the arrival of 5,000 monks who were settled in Kashmir by Asoka and his gift of the Valley to the Sangha for turning it into a centre of study and propagation of Buddhist religious texts.

The Rise of Buddhism

The introduction of Buddhism to Kashmir is attributed to a monk called Majjhantika, a disciple of Ananda the constant companion and servitor of the Great Teacher, Gautama Buddha. The Buddhist legend regarding his journey to Kashmir and his victory over the Naga king is a recension of the *Nilamatpurana* legend. A similar tradition appears in *Mulasarvastivada Vinaya pitaka* of Kashmir. In this text, Buddha is said to have forecast to Vajrapani that Madhandina, a disciple of Ananda, would propagate his religion in Kashmir, the land of blue forests. He would subdue the malevolent Huluta Naga, and extend the seat on which he would sit cross-legged to miraculously cover the whole of Kashmir, thereby ousting the Nagas from their habitation, and making the vast country of 60,000 villages an abode for meditating monks.

Similar traditions preserved in Buddhist texts testify to the prevalence of Buddhism in Kashmir from the third century B.C. to the 12th century A.D. The spread of Buddhism to Kashmir, is an event of extraordinary importance in the history of that religion. Thenceforward that country became a mistress in the Buddhist Doctrine and the headquarters of a particular School—the Mahayana and the Sarvastivadin. The influence of Kashmir was very marked, especially in the spread of Buddhism beyond India. From Kashmir it penetrated to Quandhar and Kabul and thence over Bactria. Tibetan Buddhism had also its essential origin from Kashmir, so great is the importance of this region in the history of this religion.¹⁶

Historically speaking, Asoka had a hand in the introduction of

Buddhism to Kashmir, but his son Jalauka was anti-Buddhist and destroyer of monasteries. He is said to have revived the Naga and Saiva cults. After this set-back for some time, Buddhism was re-established by the Indo-Scythian rulers, particularly Kaniska, Huska and Juska, who built several *caityas* and *mathas* at Suksaletra and other places.

Buddhism again suffered a reverse after the rule of the Kusan rulers and, later in the fifth century AD, it was nearly wiped off the Valley by the Hun ruler Mihirakula. Baka, Mihirakula's son, however, seems to have atoned for his predecessor's sins by restoring the *caityas* and *mathas*. Similarly under Meghavahana, Buddhism again flourished and he and his wife built several viharas and *caityas* and prohibited the slaughter of animals. Subsequent rulers, it appears were not all supporters of Buddhism and with the rise of the Saiva cult and philosophy, Buddhism though lingering on for some time was finally replaced by the traditional Brahmanism.

But the story of the glorious role that Kashmir played in the development of Mahayana and its propagation in distant Central Asia and China, is still preserved in Buddhist texts and translations in Ceylon, Tibet and China. Kashmir became a high school of Mahayana Buddhism during the time of Kaniska's rule and after, and attracted scholars and pilgrims from distant lands who studied the Buddhist texts at the feet of the learned pandits of the Valley. It was here that the Graeco-Buddhist art of Gandhara found its adherents who carried it to far off places in Central Asia and China.

Before we take up this account it will be useful to trace the history and development of the various Buddhist doctrines culminating in the emergence of Mahayana or Northern Buddhism in which form it is prevalent in China, Tibet, Japan and Nepal. That this school of Buddhism was born in Kashmir and developed by Kashmiri scholars who brought the impress of Kashmir Saivism to bear upon it, is an established fact. It will not, therefore, be out of place to give a brief outline of this very important development in this great religion particularly in relation to the spread of Buddhism in countries beyond the Himalayas.

Development of Sectarian

The teachings of Buddha during his lifetime and immediately afterwards (300 B.C.) found a ready and enthusiastic audience among the general population of Madhvadesa who realized a new salvation and relief in his doctrine. They had been groaning under the heavy burden of archaic and complicated Brahmanic rites and rituals and the powerful upper castes. It was thus a revolutionary movement aimed at the overthrow of the Brahmanic domination and although Buddhism had some Brahmin followers, the majority came from the lower castes. For some two centuries after Gautama's death we have little information as to the geographical extension of his doctrine, but some of the Sanskrit versions of the Vinaya represent him as visiting Muttra, North-west India and Kashmir.¹⁷

There is nothing improbable in the supposition that the first missionary activity was in the direction of Muttra and Kashmir. "Muttra was the centre of a powerful school of orthodox Brahmanism and Kashmir was from ancient times the seat of Saivism. These two divisions of the Hindu philosophy dominated the Indian mind from the north to the south and it was, therefore, necessary to convince and convert the learned pandits at these strongholds, just as in the 12th century AD. Ramanuja, leader of the Vaisnava belief, felt compelled to travel from distant Madras with the special object of combating the rival Saiva creed in Kashmir, its fountain-head.

Besides this, the pleasant climate and beautiful scenery of Kashmir are said to have been praised by Gautama himself. In the *Samyuktavastu* (chap. xI. trans. In *J.A.* 1914) the Buddha is represented as saying that Kashmir is the best land for meditation and leading a religious life. And when, therefore, Buddhism attained the status of a state religion under Asoka, Kashmir was one of the first regions to receive his attention. It was in his time that the second Buddhist council was held at Patliputra, which resulted in the codification of the Hinayana or the Lesser Vehicle. Asoka visited Kashmir twice and founded the city of Srinagar (Puranadhisthana). He took with him 5,000 monks and built numerous viharas for them there. When he left for his capital he made a gift of Kashmir to the Sangha considering it to be the fittest place for the study and propagation of the Doctrine.

The learned pandits of Kashmir imbued with the spirit of toleration and ever ready to investigate and learn every new thought, received the canon with all the respect due to it and after critically studying it gave it a new interpretation suiting the times and the aspirations of the people. Thus was produced the Mahayana or the Great Vehicle, which while holding fast to the real foundations of Buddhism, its ethical views of self-conduct and charity, is in fact an entirely new religion.

The popularity of old Buddhism rested chiefly on the simplicity of its doctrine, namely, that the state of the untrammelled self (Atman) is bliss and therefore birth is misery. The cause of misery is desire and therefore the cessation of desire and the path leading to that, is right behaviour and right concentration of thought. But the complete denial or negation of the existence of a Supreme Being or a personal God could not for long keep the minds of the general mass of people attached to this form of religion. The end which the followers of the Hinayana school seek is the redemption of man from this toilsome world of birth and death by absorption in the Brahma, not felicity in a higher and better world.

This pessimistic outlook on life and the world was doubly enhanced by the central point of Hinayana — the doctrine of Arhatship, a system of ethical and mental self-culture in which deliverance was found from all mysteries of sorrows of life in a change of heart to be reached here on this earth. This school had taught that Gautama was a Buddha, a man who by self-denying efforts continued through many hundreds of different births had acquired the ten *paramitas* or cardinal virtues in such perfection that he was able, when sin and ignorance had gained the upper hand throughout the world, to save the human race from impending ruin by preaching the doctrine of Arhatship. In other words the older school laid stress on individual's own efforts for his own salvation.

To the saints and scholars of Kashmir deeply learned in more subtle and higher philosophies, this doctrine seemed crude as well as incapable of keeping the masses attached to it for long. Coming into contact with these master-minds, the simple creed of early Buddhism got permeated with their refined ritualistic and philosophic teachings.

Kashmir, from the earliest times, seems to have been the home of the great division of Hindu religion — Saivism. And well suited it was. Situated in the very heart of the Himalyas and possessing beautiful valleys, springs, rivers, lakes and snow-clad mountains, it seemed to be the land associated with all the mythological stories of Siva and His consort Parvati. The winter when all plant life is dead and the trees are shorn of their leaves; the crisp and life-giving spring when Nature slowly comes to life; and the luscious green summer when all around there is plenty and prosperity, were a dramatic representation of Siva the destroyer, Durga the creator and Parvati, the preserver. Amongst such divine surroundings, the great rishis in their quiet hermitages like that of Vasagupta at Harwan, perfected a philosophy of a high order. Although Kashmir Saivism reached its highest glory during the eighth and ninth centuries AD, its origin and study go back to a much earlier period.

The philosophic literature of Mahayana, therefore, bears a deep impress of Kashmir Saivism whose doctrines revolve round their fundamental conceptions of Siva and Sakti. Siva is the Reality which underlies, as its innermost and true self, not only every experiencing being but also everything else in the universe. His nature has primarily a two-fold aspect, an immanent aspect in which he pervades the universe and a transcendental aspect in which he is beyond all universal manifestations. And universe with all its infinite variety of objects and means of experience is nothing but a manifestation of the immanent aspect (Sakti). This Sakti is not in any way different from or independent of Siva, but is one and the same with Him and His Creative Power, spoken of as his feminine aspect.

This belief in Siva or a Supreme Being and the adaptation of the various gods and goddesses of the Saiva cult for their own purposes readily filled up the lacunae in early Buddhism (Hinayana).

Besides, (the leaders of Mahayana urged their followers to seek to attain, not so much to Arhatship, which would involve their own salvation but to Bodhisatvaship,¹⁸ by the attainment of which they would be conferring the blessings of the Dhamma upon countless multitudes in the long ages of the future. By thus laying stress on the Bodhisatvaship rather than upon Arhatship, the new school was altering

the direction of their mental vision.

The older type of Buddhist could become an Arhat (deserving) and so attain *nirvana* in the sense of annihilation or absorption into the Universal Self. But the newer one could become a Bodhisatva (one whose nature consists in enlightenment, hence destined to become a Buddha) who, though he became entitled by the sanctity of many lives to attain *nirvana* remained alive as a god to help the seeker after release; while Buddha through transcendental philosophical appreciation of him as a superman became a great saviour-god. The old or Lesser Vehicle (Hinayana) could only appeal to the few, whereas the new or the Great Vehicle was open to all. And the opinion that every leader of their religious circle, every teacher distinguished among them for his sanctity of life, or for his extensive learning, was Bodhisatva who might have and who probably had inherited the *karma* of some great teacher of old, gave a new hope and a blissful vision to the traveller on the Path.

In fact the teachers of the Mahayana school were not slow to perceive that if Buddhism was to gain any hold over the masses, it was essential that it should adapt itself to their human needs. It became imperatively necessary, as a simple preservative measure, to convert a cold philosophical creed based on an ultra-pessimistic theory of existence, into some sort of belief in the value of human life as worth living. And if life was not to be an invariable current of misery it followed that there must also be some sort of faith in a superintending God, controlling their life and interesting Himself in man's welfare.¹⁹

The chief school of the Mahayanists thus taught devotion to the many Buddhas and their attendant Bodhisatvas; they created for their *nirvana* a dwelling place, a Heaven; and they attributed to the Bodhisatvas the will and the power to give assistance to mankind; Buddhas and Bodhisatvas both being also made subject to transmigration and reincarnation. Thus they evolved the worship of Maitreya, the Dhyani Buddhas, Manjusri, and Avlokiteswar. The first of these appears in ancient Buddhism as the name of the Buddha to come and the last is the holy spirit of the Mahayanist school. Among the Dhyani Buddhas who are philosophic abstractions corresponding to earthly Buddhas, Amitabha, that is, Infinite Light, is the Heavenly

counterpart of Gautama and soon took the most important place. Avlokiteswar proceeds from him and manifests him to the world since the death of Buddha.²⁰ He is like Siva, destroyer of the evil and the fountain of eternal bliss. Sakti the manifestation of energy is the essential counterpart of Siva and is often worshipped more than the latter. Similarly the female counterpart of the male Avlokiteswar is the form of the god chiefly worshipped in China and Japan. In these countries he is known in the feminine character of Kwan-Yin, 'Goddess of Mercy', and in this form is represented with two arms but often with four or more. "The connection of Avlokiteswar with Siva," says Sir M. Monier Williams, "is proved by the fact that in some characteristics Kwan-Yin corresponds to Durga form of Siva's wife and in others to the form called Parvati, who as dwelling in them mountains, may be supposed to look down with compassion on the world."

As may be expected voluminous literature on the new doctrine and its various branches was written during and before the reign of Kaniska. The home of early Buddhism was round about Kosala and Maghada, subject indeed to Brahmin influence, but where the sacred language was never more than a learned tongue and where the exclusive claims of the Brahmins had never been universally admitted. The Mahayana or the Great Vehicle arose in the very stronghold of Brahmanism and among a people to whom Sanskrit was a familiar tongue. The new literature, therefore, which the new movement called forth was written and has been preserved in Sanskrit.

The philosophy developed chiefly on the lines of Sarvastivadins (All Things Exist System) or realist School. Nagarjuna, the philosopher who lived in the first century A.D and was a contemporary of Kaniska, is the founder of the Madhyamika or the Middle Way which ended in Buddhist Kanteism. Later on Asangha and Vasubandhu laid the foundation of a third school, the Vignanvad, holding that all phenomena are illusions and nothing but the thought.

Though the early Buddhist doctrine had been carried to China through Indian missionaries in the second century B.C it could not take a firm root there. It was, however, three centuries later that Mahayana, after gaining in strength and popularity and attaining the

status of a state religion under Kaniska, was with great success carried to Central Asia and China mostly by Kashmirian missionaries.

Asoka died about 232 B.C. after a reign of 40 years. When the sceptre dropped from his hands, the fortunes of the Mauryan dynasty began to suffer decline. Traditions regarding his successors are discrepant. Of his sons, Tivara alone is named in the edicts, and perhaps he predeceased his father as he is not heard of subsequently.

Kalhana says that Asoka worshipped the God Siva Bhutesa at the famous shrine of Harmukutaganga in Kashmir and "obtained from the God, whom he had pleased by his austerities, a son" This son, Jalauka, appears to have become independent in Kashmir after his father's death. Saint Avadhuta, "the vanquisher of Bauddha controversialists," was his religious preceptor. Jalauka was a popular hero and an ardent devotee of Siva and used for worship daily at Bhutesa and Vijayeswara shrines. To cover the distance which is fully four days' journey by foot, he had arranged a relay of ponies all along the route. At first an opponent of Buddhists, he became friendly to them finally. Kalhana records a local tradition of unmistakable Buddhist colouring to show how the king modified his attitude to the Buddhists through divine intercession.

Kalhana tells us that during the latter part of Asoka's reign the country was harassed by the incursions of the Mlechhas (foreigners) and Jalauka is described as a great warrior who cleared the land of these oppressors and made extensive conquests. He is said to have overrun Kanauj and Gandhara and brought from these places men of letters whom he settled in Kashmir. Incidentally, Kalhana gives a clue to the administrative system in Kashmir at that time. Up to that time there existed in this land, which had not yet reached its proper development in legal administration, wealth and other respects, a government like in most countries. There were only seven main state officials; the judge, the revenue superintendent, the treasurer, the commander of the army, the envoy, the Purohita, and the astrologer. By establishing eighteen offices (Karmasthana) in accordance with traditional usage, the king created from that time onwards a condition of things as under Yudhisthira.²¹

Jalauka is the hero of many traditions recorded by Kalhana.

Once, runs the legend, the king heard of the sanctity of the Sodara spring (Naran Nag) from the Nandipurana, and thenceforth used to worship at that spring. He wished that it might be near the shrine of Jyestrarudra which he was building at Srinagar. Being engrossed with some work he forgot one day his daily observance and could not take his bath from the Naran Nag spring, when lo! to his great surprise he found a spring breaking forth in a waterless spot at Srinagar "which was alike to Sodara in colour, taste and other respects."

This king founded several villages, amongst which was Varabala, which is now known by the name of Barawal and situated on the right bank of the river Kankanai about two kilometres above its confluence with the Sindh river. He offered to the Jyestrarudra temple 100 women of his seraglio who used to dance daily before the idol. His wife, Ishanadevi, built temples on the approaches to the Valley. The king together with his queen retired after a reign of 60 years to Siramochana and there passed away.

Damodara, who was a descendant of Asoka, "or belonged to some other family", succeeded to the throne. He was a supporter of Saivism. He founded a city on a plateau in Yachh Pargana which is thenceforth called Damodar Udar after his name. In order to raise water to this town, he constructed a long dam called Gudda Suth. "When", deplores Kalhana, "a high-minded man wishes to execute some beneficial work of an extraordinary character, there arise, alas! obstacles, owing to the deficiency of men's spiritual merits from former births." One day he was going to the river Jhelum to have his bath after a *Shradh ceremony*, when some Brahmins asked him for food before taking his bath. The king replied, "I cannot feed you before bathing. Go away (sarpata) sharp." Thereupon the Brahmins cursed him, "May you be transformed into a serpent (sarpa)." Damodara was dismayed and begged their mercy. The curse could not be taken back. "But when you will hear the whole Ramayana recited in a single day the effect of our curse will cease." Damodara became a snake and it is believed that even to the present day he is roaming in that form amidst the dark solitudes of the plateau.

Damodar Udar is now the site of the Srinagar airfield.

The legend about King Damodara being transformed into a snake

is still current among the local inhabitants. Satras Teng, a waste spot high up on the *karewa* is named as the site of Damodara's place and a spring at the adjoining hamlet of Lalgam as the place where the king performed his ablutions.²²

Indo-Greek Occupation

After the fall of the Mauryan Empire, north-western India was subjected to several foreign invasions and it is significant that there is a gap of at least 200 years in the Rajatarangini between the death of Damodra II and the advent of the Kusan rule. It has been noted how Jalauka waged a ruthless war against Mlechhas, who were probably Indo-Greek hordes trying to establish their kingdom in territories bordering on Kashmir.²³ Transgressed that for a few years Demetrius was the lord of a realm which included southern Kashmir. A fragment in Ptolemy (VII, 42) gives the name of two provinces in Menander's home kingdom east of the Jhelum of which Kaspeira, the upper valleys of the Jhelum, Chenab and Ravi would correspond to southern Kashmir.

We have it on the authority of *Milindapanha* that the discussion between Nagasena, the Buddhist saint and Milinda or Menander, the Indo-Greek ruler of north-western India, was held at a place only 12 *yojans* from Kashmir.²⁴ Cunningham records a large find of silver coins of Azes and Azilises on the bank of the Jhelum river in the hills between Baramula and Jhelum. All this points to a definite rule though temporary, of the Indo Greeks over Kashmir.

This contact with the Greek is responsible for the beautiful architectural and sculptural style of the old Kashmir temples, which have won admiration from visitors to the Valley. The coinage of the later kings has also been influenced by this contact. But the most important of all is the development of Gandhara or the Graeco-Buddhist art, depicting scenes from the life of the Buddha. The aquiline nose, the large lotus eye and the folded drapery found in the terracotta and stone images unearthed at Ushkur near Baramula and some other places, indicate the deep Grecian influence on the Kashmirian artists following this contact.

The last Greek ruler of the frontier regions and the Kabul valley

was Hermaeus, who flourished about the middle of the first century BC.²⁵ Hemmed in by enemies on all sides, he succumbed to the pressure of the advancing Kusans under Kujala Kadphises. The Greek power had been internally weakened and could not withstand the inroads of these barbarian hordes.' The facts regarding the origin and movement of the great Kusan race whose sway extended from the farthest corners of Central Asia to the borders of Bengal may be briefly mentioned here.²⁶

In the second century B.C. a movement of population started in the vast Central Asian region which profoundly affected the histories of Central Asia and India for a number of centuries to come. The Graeco-Bactrian dominion was overwhelmed entirely about 162 B.C. by the Yu-echi, nomad people, who had been driven westwards from their settlements on the borders of China by the Hiung-nu, the Huns of Degnignes. According to the oldest Chinese history, the Yu-echi lived in the vicinity of present day Kansu province and about 177 B.C. were subjugated like all their neighbors by the Tukharian Hiung-nu. Between 167-161 B.C. they renewed the struggle without success. Lao-Shang, the Khan of Hiung-nu slew their king Chang-lun, and made a drinking cup of his skull, and the great mass of the vanquished people (the Great Yu-echi) left their homes and moved westward reaching and subduing the kingdom of Ki-pin (Kabul Valley). In 138 B.C. the king of China sent a certain Chang Ch'ien to urge them to return and help him to clear the caravan route by thrusting back the Hiung-nu. But the Yu-echi were too happily settled in a rich and peaceful land to listen to his representations and he returned to China reaching there in 126 B.C.

In about 15 a.d, Kadphises I, a chieftain of the Kusan clan of Yu-echi welded together all the sections of the Yu-echi nation and conquered Afghanistan. He was succeeded by his son Kadphises II probably in 45 a.d who conquered north-western India as far as Banaras. Kaniska succeeded him in 78 a.d and extended his empire to the borders of Bengal.²⁷

Indo-Scythian Ruler

With the names of the three Kusan kings, Huska, Juska, Kaniska,

we reach once more the terra firma of historical record. The identity of Kaniska with the great Kusan or Indo-Scythian ruler of north-western India, so well known to us from Buddhist traditions, the coins and inscriptions, was recognised long ago. The name of Huska, frequent enough in the form of Huviska on the coins and inscriptions, has been borne out by epigraphical evidence. Juska alone remains to be searched for. Kalhana's account of the reign of these kings, who are supposed to have ruled simultaneously, is brief enough, but is undoubtedly based on genuine historical traditions. It clearly describes them as princes of Turuska nationality, as powerful sovereigns and as faithful patrons of the Buddhist Church. On these points the statements of the Chronicle are fully supported by the most authentic records. The continued existence of the three places, Kaniskapur, Huskapur and Juskapur, which are described as foundations of these kings and which survive to this day, is likely to have assisted in preserving the recollection of their founders.

That Kashmir was included in the wide dominions of the great Kusan dynasty is a fact amply attested by the combined evidence of Buddhist records and the coins, copper pieces of Kaniska and Huviska being found in profusion at many of the old sites in Kashmir. The beginning of the Christian era was a period when north-western India witnessed a great fusion of ideas and Indian, Persian and Greek religion must have been in contact at the university town of Taxila and countries round about it. Kashmir too, if somewhat secluded to be a meeting place of nations, was a considerable intellectual center.²⁸

All this is amply proved by the different legends and figures depicted on the coins of Kaniska, the most famous of the Kusan conquerors who ruled over north-western India and Central Asia. His authority had its nucleus in Kashmir but it extended to both sides of the Himalayas from Yarkand and Khotan to Agra and Sind. It has been established that at the beginning of his reign he was not a Buddhist but adopted this creed later on, perhaps due to the influence of the Kashmirian monks whom he patronised. He was so enamored of his new religion that he wanted to beat the record of Asoka in its propagation. But the existence of conflicting and contradictory schools of thought among the followers of Buddha's religion, confused him

and, therefore, under the advice of Parsva his religious preceptor, he decided to call a Council of the learned doctors on the model of the one held at Patliputra during Asoka's reign.

It was as a direct result of Asoka's Council that Buddhism was carried to countries south of the Indian peninsula — Ceylon, Burma, Java, etc. Kaniska's Council gave a fresh impetus to the faith. Tibet, south Central Asia, and China lay along the great missionary routes of Northern Buddhism; the Kirghiz are said to have carried Buddhist settlements as far as the Caspian; on the east the religion was introduced into Korea in 372 A.D and thence into Japan in 552 A.D.²⁹ The Council is important also for the fact that it marks the point of separation between northern and southern Buddhism, from now onwards Mahayanists gained a position superior to that of the Hinayanists. According to Buddhist tradition, Kaniska held the third Buddhist Council in Kashmir and Heun Tsiang on his visit to the Valley found still the memory of that ruler fully alive in the kingdom. The popularity and the power enjoyed by Buddhism in Kashmir, under the sway of the Turuska kings, as observed by Kalhana, is historically correct.

Heun Tsiang gives a vivid picture of the proceedings of the Council collected from a study of its records and reports maintained in different libraries in Kashmir which were extant then. Paramarth (499-560 A.D) in his *Life of Vasubandhu* also gives an account of the Council, but though differing in detail generally agrees with the observations of Heun Tsiang. He says that the king acting in consultation with Parsva issued summons to all the learned doctors of his realm. They came in such numbers that a severe test was imposed and only 499 Arhats were selected. There was some discussion as to the place of meeting but finally Kashmir was selected and the king built a residential monastery for the Brethren to reside and hold their meetings in.³⁰

When the Council met at the Kundalvan Monastery near the capital of Kashmir³¹ there arose a question as to whether Vasumitra should be admitted, seeing that he was not an Arhat but aspired to the career of a Bodhisatva. However, later on he was not only admitted but made the President. This was a signal victory for the Mahayanists. Other celebrated scholars

including Asvagosh, Vasumitra and Nagarjuna took part in the deliberations. Writes Heun Tsian: Then there were in the congregation certain priests versed in the doctrine of the Great Vehicle, viz., Visudhasimha, Jinabandhu, and of the Sarvastivadin school the following: Sugatamitra, Vasumitra; and of the school of Mahasangika the following: Surgadar and Jinamitra.

About the scholars of Kashmir who took part in the Council, Heun Tsiang remarks: The country from remote times was distinguished for learning and these priests were all of high religious merit and conspicuous virtues, as well as of manner, talent and power of exposition of doctrine; and though the priests of other nations were in their own way distinguished yet they could not be compared with these — so different were they from the ordinary class.³²

The Council which sat for six months made strenuous efforts to bring into order the scattered sayings, theories and dictums of various doctors of the Law. The texts of the *Tripitaka* were collected and the Council "composed 100,000 stanzas of Upadesh Sastras explanatory of the Canonical sutras; 100,000 stanzas of Vinaya Vibhasa Sastras, explanatory of the Vinaya; and 100,000 stanzas of Abhidharma Vibhasa Sastra, explanatory of fat *Abhidharma*. For this exposition of the *Tripitaka* all the learning from remote antiquity was thoroughly examined; the general sense and the terse language was again and again made clear and distinct and learning was widely diffused for the safe guiding of the disciples."

The Kaniska commentaries were written in the Sanskrit language because the Kashmiri and the northern priests who formed his Council belonged to the isolated Aryan colonies, which had been little influenced by the growth of the Indian vernacular dialects. In this it was distinct from Asoka's Council who wrote all their books in Pali King Kaniska caused the treatise when finished to be written out on copper plates and enclosed these in stone boxes which he deposited in a tope made for the purpose. He then ordered spirits to keep and guard the texts and not to allow any to be taken out of the country by heretics (non-Buddhists); those who wished to study them could do so in the country. When leaving to return to his country, Kaniska renewed Asoka's gift of all Kashmir to the Buddhist Church.³³

Although some efforts have recently been made to find the buried copper plates engraved with the proceedings of the Council, no trace has yet been found of them. They perhaps still lie somewhere near about the old city of Srinagar and wait to be unearthed by some future lucky archaeologist. Kaniska's Council marks the beginning of a new epoch in the history of Buddhism. The Council gave an official and a superior status to the Mahayanist Doctrine which may rightly be said to have been a gift from Kashmiri Brahmins to Buddhism.

Buddhist Acharya

The composition of the Vibhasa-sastras in Kashmir indicates that Kashmir grew up to be an academic centre attracting distinguished *acaryas* from other places. The accounts of the Chinese travellers and Paramartha show that Katayaniputra, Asvaghosa, Vasubandhu, Vasumitra, Dharmatrata, Sanghabhadra, Visuddhasimha, Jinabandhu, Suagtamitra, Suryadeva, Jinatrata, Kankavatsa and many other distinguished teachers and writers lived in Kashmir from the time of Kaniska. Taranath tells us that during the reign of Kaniska, one wealthy Brahmin called Sutra maintained the Vaibhasika teacher Dharmatrata and the earliest Sautrantika teacher Mahabhadanta Sthavira along with their disciples. Dharmatrata is well known as one of the four renowned *acaryas* of the Vaibhasika school the other three being Ghosaka of Tukhara, Vasumitra of Maru, and Buddhadeva of Varanasi. Vasumitra is another famous figure of Kashmir, but there are five authors bearing this name. The Sautrantika teacher Srilabha was an inhabitant of Kashmir. He was a disciple of Kunala. Sanghabhadra was another Kashmirian *acarya* who was a profound scholar of the Vibhasa-sastras of the Sarvastivada school. He wrote a commentary on Vasumitra's *Prakar-anapada* and was the author of the *Abhidharmavatara-sastra*. One of his distinguished students is Vasubandhu who studied with him the six systems of philosophy and the art of dialectics. He compressed the *Abhidharma* texts and their Vibhasas in his *Abhidharmakosa and Bhasya* and sent them to the Kashmir Vaibhasikas who were greatly pleased with them. Vasubandhu later on turned from the Sarvastivada point of view to the Sautrantika as is evidenced in the expression of his opinions in the *Bhasya* and

which elicited vehement criticisms from Sanghabhadra who was a staunch Sarvastivadin and wrote two treatises to refute Vassubandhu's later views.

Gunaprabha and Vimalamitra are the two other teachers whose names occur in the Records of Heun Tsiang. Gunaprabha is mentioned by Taranalh and Bu-stone as a great authority on the *Vinaya* of the Mulasarvastivadin and as the author of several works. Heun Tsiang refers to the monastery at Matipur where he composed his treatises. As regards Vimalamitra, Heun Tsiang writes that he was a native of Kashmir and an adherent of the Sarvata (that is, Sarvastivada) school having made a profound study of canonical and heterodox scriptures. He had travelled in India to learn the mysteries of the *Tripitaka*.

Buddhist Missionaries

As a result of Kaniska's Council, there burst forth an enthusiastic missionary spirit among the Kashmiris who carried this religion to China across difficult passes and thus produced a great fermentation and controversy in Chinese thought. One has only to compare the China of the Hans with the China of the T'angs to see how great was the change wrought by this faith. The diffusion of the Indian influence was due to the activities of these missionaries which were exclusively Buddhist and the preponderating number came from Kashmir.³⁴ The intervening tract of Central Asia came naturally first under the influence of the Buddhist doctrine. Although the movement of Central Asian tribes commonly took the form of invading India, yet the current of culture was in the opposite direction.

For instance, traditions respecting the origin of Khotan preserved in the travels of Heun Tsiang and also in the Tibetan Scriptures some of which are expressly said to be translations from the language of the Li, are popular legends, but they agree in essentials and appear to contain a kernel of important truth, namely, that Khotan was founded by two streams of colonisation coming from China and from India, the latter being somehow connected with Asoka. It is remarkable that the introduction of Buddhism is attributed not to these original colonists but to a later missionary who, according to Heun Tsiang, came from Kashmir. The Tibetan text gives the date of conversion as

the reign of King Vijayasambhava, 170 years after the foundation of Khotan. At that time, monk named Vairocana who was an incarnation of Manjusri, came to Khotan from Kashmir. He is said to have introduced a new language as well as Mahayanism and the King Vijayasambhava built for him the great monasterty of Tsarma outside the capital, which was miraculously supplied with relics (about 80 B.C. or 60 A.D).³⁵

Kashmiri Missionaries in China

Among numerous scholars and Buddhist monks who elected to work in China as exiles from their mother country, for the sacred mission of carrying to China the message of Indian and Buddhist culture, a short account of a few as recorded in the Chinese texts would be of interest. That a number of Kashmiri monks and missionaries risked their lives to carry the message across difficult mountain passes, can easily be imagined, considering the rapid spread of Buddhism in the vast sub-continent of China, Kashmir takes the leading part in the transmission of Buddhist Traditions directly to China. The number of Buddhist scholars who went to china from Kashmir is larger than that of those who went from other parts of India. Kashmir was the most flourishing centre of Buddhist learning in India in this period. It was the centre of the most powerful Buddhist sect of Northern India, the Sarvastivada.³⁶

Much of the missionary activity of the Kashmirian Buddhists seems to have been centred round the celebrated Kumarajiva who must have made many intimate connections with the Kashmiri scholars of his time while he was receiving education in Kashmir.³⁷ His father Kumarayana is said to have been a minister of a petty king by hereditary right. For reasons not known he gave up this job and went to Kucha where he slowly rose to the position of Rajguru. While in Kucha a princess, Jiva, of the royal family fell in love with him and they were married. They had a son whom they named Kumarajiva. We learn that just after his birth Jiva, his mother, turned a nun, taking the responsibility of Kumarajiva's upbringing herself. After giving him some rudimentary education at Kucha, she took him, while only of nine years, to Kashmir for further study. In Kashmir he studied under

a learned Buddhist scholar Bandhudatta. Kumarajiva's intelligence and manners won him many admirers and friends among his fellow students and teachers and when after completing his studies, he returned to Kucha he was accompanied there by a large number of Kashmirian scholars. At Kucha he established a monastery and undertook the translation of Sanskrit Buddhist texts and in collaboration with his Kashmirian followers explained these to the Central Asian and Chinese audiences, which flocked to hear his sermons.

Living though in this remote corner of Asia his fame spread far and wide and he was recognised as a living encyclopedia of Indian learning including a knowledge of the Vedas. In 383 A.D Fu-Chien, Emperor of the Tsin dynasty sent his general Lu-kuang to subdue Kucha. The expedition was successful and among the captives taken was the celebrated Kumarajiva. Lu-kuang was so pleased with the magnificent and comfortable life of Kucha that he thought of settling there, but Kumarajiva prophesied that he was destined to higher things. So they left to try their fortune in China. Lu-kuang rose to be the ruler of the state known as southern Liang and his captive and adviser became one of the greatest names in Chinese Buddhism. At the express request of the Chinese Emperor he consented to go to the capital in 401 A.D. He carried on his mission there and was later joined by many of his Kashmirian monks. He died in the capital of China in 413 A.D.

Kumarajiva himself was a literary genius or at least had a genius for clarifying the minds of some good scholars whom the emperor of his day lent to him for translation work, for example, the two celebrated Kashmiri collaborators of his, Yasa and Vimalaksha. Between them the members of this group succeeded in giving a real Chinese contact to ideas, which had hitherto been only nebulous and elusive. The most influential of the many works translated by Kumarajiva and his collaborators was the "Lotus Flower Scripture of the Mysterious Law." There had been three or four translations of it before, but not apparently with any great success. This time it got home, as well it might. It is an amazing work, a drama of time and eternity.

Mereopole says that Kashmiri monks went and spread Buddhism

in other parts of China. A Kashmiri monk, Sanghabuti, reached the northern capital of China in 381 A.D. His activities can be traced till 383-84. At the request of Chinese scholars, he translated some Buddhist texts like *Vinayapitaka* from Sanskrit to Chinese. He also wrote an exhaustive commentary on it. It is not known whether he returned to Kashmir or passed the rest of his life in China.

While Sanghabuti was in China a greater scholar named Gautamsangha went from Kashmir to the northern capital of China with a number of Kashmirian followers. He reached Ch'ang-ngan in 384 A.D. The Chinese records mention that he was a profound scholar and a born teacher. He stayed for a few years at Ch'ang-ngan, where he translated a number of Buddhist texts into Chinese. Being a master of Abhidharma he wrote several books on this branch of Buddhism and also revised many previous translations of the texts. He had acquired a proficiency in the Chinese language. Later he came to know that a powerful school of Buddhist learning had been established at Lu-shan in the south of China by a Sogdian monk, Hui-yuan, who by the way played a great part in the co-ordination of Buddhist learning in China. Gautamsangha, therefore, decided to go to Lu-shan and reaching there in 391 A.D gave himself up heart and soul to the propagation of the Buddhist doctrine. There also he translated a number of Buddhist texts with the help of his Kashmirian collaborators. Thence he went to Nanking and gained enormous influence among the ruling classes. One of the nobles built a monastery for him where he carried on his literary work.

Two Kashmirian scholars associated with the great Kumarajiva have been mentioned by the Chinese texts in connection with the translation of Buddhist sacred books and writing of commentaries thereon. They are Punyatrata and his pupil Dharmayasa. We do not know much about Punyatrata except that he perhaps went to China at the invitation of Kumarajiva towards the end of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century and worked with him in 404 A.D. He was also at Kucha when Kumarajiva was taken as prisoner to China and followed him there to help him in his missionary work.

About Dharmayasa we know a little more, He was the son of a Kashmiri Brahmin and came in contact with Punyatrata at the age of

14. After thoroughly studying the Buddhist and other literature he left for China at the age of thirty. He travelled extensively in Asia, converting a large number of people to his faith and writing books. He reached China sometimes in between 397 and 401 and remained there till 432 or 435. In collaboration with a large number of Kashmirian scholars then working in China, he translated several important works into Chinese. He then returned to Central Asia and probably to Kashmir.

Among the celebrated Kashmirian monks who were adventurous enough to travel across the high mountains into China, the name of Buddhayasas stands high. He was the only son of a Kashmiri Brahmin who was no believer in Buddhism. One day a monk called at his door for alms, but the old Brahmin in his rage attacked him and turned him out. Retribution followed soon. The hand that had struck the monk was paralysed and in order to expiate the sin, the Brahmin went in search of him. He requested him to come to his house and meekly and devoutly begged for pardon and to show his deep reverence to the monk offered him his only son Yasa to be taken into the fold. The monk accepted him. Yasa was then only 13 years of age and after undergoing a thorough training in the various Buddhist texts was given the robe of a monk. At the age of 27 he left for China to preach to the people there. He reached Kashghar where while partaking of a feast given annually by the Chief of that city to the Buddhist monks he attracted the Chiefs attention.

There were 3,000 more in the city but the demeanour and the vast learning of Yasa captivated the mind of the Chief who became his devout follower and kept him in Kashghar for a number of years. It was here that he came in contact with Kumarajiva who was travelling to Kucha and who stayed in Kashghar for some time. Both of them worked together at some translation. When Kucha was invaded by the Chinese the Chief of Kashghar went to its aid leaving Yasa in charge of his son. But he was too late, Kucha having meanwhile fallen to the Chinese general and Kumarajiva taken as a prisoner to China. When Yasa learnt of this his heart saddened and he longed to join Kumarajiva in Ch'ang-ngan. Here also he was responsible for translating a number of works into Chinese. When Kumarajiva died, Yasa lost heart and

returned to Kashmir. Between 410-413 A.D he translated four works into Chinese among which were *Dirgha-gama* and *Dharmaguptaka-Vinaya*. He was a monk of high moral sense and always refused to accept any presents in cash or kind, saying that to accept presents was derogatory to a monk.

The name of Vimalaksha is heard to be another collaborator of Kumarajiva who had gone with him to Kucha and when he was taken as a prisoner to China, followed him there. He worked with him in China from 406 to 413 A.D translating several works with him there and explaining them to the people and the students. After Kumarajiva's death in 413 he went to south China and worked there for the rest of his life.

South China had also its batch of Kashmiri missionaries. Buddhajiva, who was a collaborator and companion of Fa-Hien reached south China by sea in 423. Fa-Hien had during his travels in Central Asia and India collected a large number of Sanskrit manuscripts some of which were later translated by Buddhajiva into the Chinese language. He also probably worked in China for the rest of his life.

But one of the greatest sons of Kashmir who was responsible for converting the whole of Java and the neighboring islands to the Buddhist faith was Gunavarman. He was a prince of the royal family of Kashmir. His grandfather Haribhadra being a tyrant was banished from his kingdom and had to spend the rest of his life as a wanderer in mountains and marshes. His father, Sanganand, also was in exile. From his very childhood Gunavarman was religious by nature and at an early age he thoroughly grasped the Buddhist Scriptures and committed thousands of sutras to memory. It appears that at that time the king of Kashmir died issueless and the nobles and ministers decided to invite Gunavarman to be the king. But he was so imbued with the religious and missionary zeal that he refused the offer and instead started on a long pilgrimage to the holy Buddhist places in India. He then went to Ceylon where he was warmly welcomed by the Buddhist community. He worked with eminent scholars there and was responsible for improving the customs of the people of Ceylon. Thence he went to Java. Fa-Hien tells us that in 418 A.D Brahminism flourished in Java and the Buddhists were not worth mentioning. This position, however,

changed altogether only a few years later due to the preachings of Gunavarman. The king and his family were the first to be converted by him to the Buddhist faith in 423 A.D and the population soon followed suit. Being a Kashmiri, Gunavarman was most probably a Sarvastivadin which explains the study of this school of philosophy by the Javanese Buddhists.

Gunavarman's fame spread far and wide and emissaries from the neighbouring islands came in large numbers inviting him to visit their homeland. At last the Emperor of China also came to know about his work and the Buddhist theologians there requested him to send emissaries to Java to ask Gunavarman to visit China. When they came to him, he agreed to go to Nanking where he reached in 431 A.D after converting nearly all the islands on the way. In Nanking, the Emperor himself went out to receive him and built a magnificent monastery for him — Jetavanvihara — after the name of the famous monastery in India.

Gunavarman was, however, destined to live only for a year in Nanking where he died in 432 A.D. But it seems that this last year of his life was of intense activity since no less than 14 works were either translated or written by him in this year.

The mention of Jetavana monastery reminds us of another Kashmirian monk who worked there and probably met Gunavarman in 431. He was Dharmamitra, a famous teacher of Dhyana or meditative school. He translated several Sanskrit works on meditation into the Chinese language and also taught a large number of students in this branch of Buddhist philosophy. He was a quiet worker. At first he had gone to Kucha where the authorities would not allow him to proceed to China. He, however, evaded the frontier guards and reached Tun-huang where he founded a monastery and planted thousands of trees around it. It was in 424 A.D that he went to South China and lived there up to his death, in 442 A.D. He translated 12 Buddhist texts into the Chinese language.

Buddhavarman, another Kashmiri monk went to western China shortly before 433 A.D and being a specialist in Vibhasa translated *Mahavihhasa-sastra* in 60 chapters during the years 437-439 A.D. There was another Kashmirian missionary, Ratnacinta, who originally

belonged to a royal family and was a specialist in Vinaya. He went to China reaching Lo-yang in 693 A.D. He founded a monastery there named Tien-chu-sse, "The Monastery of India" and translated seven works from Sanskrit between 693 to 706. He died in 721 A.D. During the tenth century the Chinese Annals mention the name of T'ien-si-tsai, a native of Kashmir, who came to the Chinese capital and was put in charge of a board of translators by the Chinese emperor and it was as a result of his efforts that the board was able to enrich the Chinese Buddhist literature by more than two hundred works. In 1005 another Kashmiri monk Mu-lo-she-ki, went to China and carried on the missionary work in collaboration with many more Indian monks' Kashmir had been the high school of Buddhist teachings. Numerous scholars well versed in the different philosophical branches of this great doctrine laboured at producing works of deep merit and imparting education to students coming from far and near. Indian students who came to Kashmir for higher studies were inspired by the example of Kashmirian workers in China and after hearing of their wonderful exploits many of them followed their footprints in that land.

Missionaries in Tibet

Let us now turn our attention to the mysterious land of Tibet and influence of Buddhism upon its people.

Chinese Pilgrims in Kashmir

Whereas Kashmiri monks, missionaries, writers and scholars were busy in propagating the religion and culture of India in the Chinese Empire, there was an unending stream of pilgrims and students coming from that country to the holy shrines of India and the seats of Indian learning. Kashmir which abounded in both and which stood astride the overland route to India, was thus the special object of these visits. The knowledge the pilgrims and students from China gained in the Valley was later diffused by them in their own country. Conversely, they were responsible for influencing the art and culture of Kashmir by that of their own country.

The records of these travellers not only throw a considerable light on the political, geographical and economic condition of Kashmir during their times but also give a vivid picture of many famous men of letters and their writings. That the Chinese and Tibetan Bhiksus and pilgrims used to visit Kashmir in very great numbers is strikingly proved by an interesting verse in the *Rajjararangini*. Describing the reign of Meghavahana and the religious foundations of his queen Amritaprabha, Kalhana says: His queen Amritaprabha caused a vihara called Amritabhavana to be constructed for the benefit of foreign Bhiksus.

The spiritual guide (guru) of her father, who had come from a foreign country called Loh and who in the language of that country was designated *stonpa* built the stupa called Lohstonpa.

The Amritabhavana vihara has been identified by Stein at the Vantabhawan locality of Srinagar. This vihara was in a flourishing state during Ou-kong's visit (759 A.D) who mentions it as the "Monastery of Ngo-mi-t'o-po-wan (transcribed as Amitabhavan). Vantabhawan is a suburb of Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir and is the terminus of the Leh-Srinagar route.

Fa-Hien visited India in 399 A.D and although he personally did not pay a visit to the Valley proper, he nearly touched its frontiers. He visited Gilgit and Ladakh coming through the country of Eastern Turkistan. He mentions that Buddhism was in a flourishing condition in the country and the Indian sacred literature was widely diffused in Central Asia. He had a Kashmiri collaborator with him named Buddhajiva who accompanied him to China.

Soon after Fa-Hien, another Chinese monk, Che-mong, started from Ch'ang-nagn in 404 A.D for a journey to India. He was accompanied by 14 other monks and took a Kashmiri monk as a guide. After a strenuous journey over Central Asia they reached the Pamirs, which Che-mong crossed with only six companions, the rest finding it too difficult for them to continue the journey. The Kashmiri guide also lost his life while crossing the passes. Che-mong and his companions stayed on in Kashmir for a pretty long time after which they started on a pilgrimage to holy Buddhist shrines in India. He returned to China in 424 A.D taking the same route by which he had

come.

Another Chinese monk, Fa-yong, started for India in 420 A.D. accompanied by a party of 20 monks. He came via Turfan, Kucha, kashghar and then over the Pamirs and along the Gilgit valley reached Kashmir. Fa-yong and his companions passed more than a year in the valley to study the Sanskrit language and the Buddhist lore. He then returned to China by sea visiting all the holy places in India on his way home.

Heun Tsiang universally respected in China as the Great Master of the Law, came in search of further knowledge to India in 631 A.D. Travelling by the usual Central Asian route he entered Kashmir from Urusha (Hazara) in the west and passed two years (May 631 to April 633) in the Valley, studying the *sutras* and *sastras*. He was received with great pomp and show by the then king of Kashmir who sent his nephew to escort him from his first resting place in the Valley near Baramulla to the palace in Srinagar. When Heun Tsiang approached the capital, the king of Kashmir, with his whole court came out in person to meet him. The road was covered with parasols and standards, and the whole route was strewn with flowers. Then he begged him to mount a large elephant and walked in his train.

The next day, after a feast in the palace, the king invited Heun Tsiang to begin courses on the difficult points in the doctrine. After hearing that the love of learning had brought him from distant lands and that when he desired to read he found himself without texts, he put twenty scribes at his disposal to obtain for him copies of the Buddhist gospel as well as of later philosophic treatises.

In Kashmir he found numerous religious institutions with more than 5,000 monks residing in them. There was one temple containing the holy tooth relic of Buddha. Another *matha* was famous as the seat of the great master of *sastras*, Sanghabhadra. There was another neighboring monastery famous for its presiding sage Skandhila. He also noted two other monasteries as the abode of the two great masters Purna and Bodhila. His biographer tells that the pilgrim found in Kashmir a master aged 70 after his own heart, a learned Mahayanist doctor with whom he studied the works of Nagarjuna. This master of outstanding virtue observed the rules of discipline with a rigorous

purism. He was gifted with a profound intellect and his vast learning embraced every branch of knowledge. His talents and his enlightenment partook of the divine and his benevolent heart was full of affection for the sages and of respect for the lettered. Heun Tsiang questioned him without reserve and gave himself up, night and day, to study with him with untiring zeal. He himself has left us a very picturesque description of this 'aerial Paradise. "The country," he says, "has a circumference of seven hundred leagues, and its four frontiers have a background of mountains of prodigious height. It is reached by very narrow passes. That is why none of the neighboring princes has been able to attack it successfully. On the western side, the capital adjoins a large river. The country is suitable for the cultivation of grain and produces a great abundance of flowers. The climate is cold and glacial; much snow falls but there is little wind. The inhabitants are good looking but they are crafty, light and frivolous, and of a weak pusillanimous disposition. They wear woollen caps and white cotton clothes."

During his time the sway of the Kashmir king extended to Taxila.³⁸ When he returned to China after performing the pilgrimage to Various Buddhist centres and holy places in India, Heun Tsiang was given a fitting reception by his own king and he became the centre of great religious and literary activity where seekers after truth and knowledge came from far and near, who in turn diffused this knowledge particularly in Korea and Japan.

After Heun Tsiang there are the accounts of another Chinese traveller, Ou-kong known also as Dharmadhatu. He came to Ki-pin in 759 A.D through the Kabul valley and Gandhara. He lived in Kashmir for four years and there he took the final vows of a Buddhist monk. He studied Sanskrit and learnt Vinaya in seven sections from three teachers. In the convent of Mong-te or Mundi-vihara, he learnt the *Silas* and studied the Vinaya of the Mulasarvastivadins. He refers to the following seven of the Buddhist establishments besides the Mong-te vihara: (1) Amitabhavana, (2) Ananga or Anandbhavana, (3) Ki-tche, (4) Nao-yi-le, (5) Jo-jo (6) Ye-li - te- Io, (7) K'o-toon.

He noticed more than 300 monasteries in the kingdom and a large number of stupas and images. After four years of study he went to Gandhara and resided in the monastery of Jou-lo-Ii — a monastery

carrying the name of the king, its founder, belonging to the line of kaniska.³⁹ Since HeunTsiang mentions only about 100 convents existing in his time in Kashmir, it can be concluded that there had been a rise in the popularity of Buddhism during the intervening period of a little more than one hundred years, Ou-kong also makes mention of the Zojila route as the highway leading to T'ou-fan or Tibet and of the Po-liu representing the present Gilgit road.

Graeco-Buddhist Art

Kashmir though not remaining directly under the sway of the Indo-Grecian empire for long, was yet profoundly affected by the Greek artistic influence. From bygone ages, the inhabitants of the Happy Valley have been known throughout the world as accomplished artisans, possessing an artistic bent of mind, influenced to a very great extent by their beautiful natural surroundings. Even their indigenous philosophy—the Kashmir Sai vism — has raised art to the highest pinnacle as according to Abhinavagupta to knead nature into a work of art is the nearest approximation to the knowledge of godhead.

Kashmiris have been known to outsiders as *Shashtra Shilpina* or architects on account of their well-known skill in building. Similarly, in the realm of sculpture they, like the Greeks, personified the natural objects and imparted to them life and vividness as beheld and experienced by them in their heavenly homeland. Religious fervour of these early artists found outward expression in the building of temples and ikonographs. The Cosmic Force, the animating principle of Indian Pantheism was worshiped, as noted above, under the name of Siva. He inspired the artist-sculptor of Kashmir. Siva as Terrible — Bhairava, Siva as Saviour and above all Siva as the Ardhanareswar united with his consort, Parvati, the Maid of the Mountains. Mr Grousset observes:

There is a profound symbolism in this philosophic import we should be careful not to misinterpret, for it shows us the god of destruction as one and the same with the creative principle, the act of death as the source of generative power.

This unique development in the Kashmir sculpture was carried to Central Asia, Tibet and China where under the influence of Buddhism, Avlokiteswar, the Adhi Buddha and the numerous Dhyani Buddhas

are represented as both destructive power as well as creative energy. Right from the farthest corners of Central Asia to Japan and the uplands of Tibet, the influence of this art is apparent even to this day.

China has been deeply affected by the introduction of the Graeco-Buddhist art which followed in the wake of missionaries from Kashmir and the rest of India to that country. That the home of this school of art was Gandhara has now been established. The part which the Kashmiri artists played in the development of the Gandharan art has not been fully brought out by the authorities on the subject, presumably due to the paucity of archaeological data in the Valley. But the recent discoveries of terracotta tiles at Harvan and fragments of statuary at Ushkur, fill to a great extent this lacuna. All the same the close political and cultural ties existing between Kashmir and Gandhara in ancient times is proof positive of the fact that the Kashmiri artists must have been responsible to a great extent for the development of this famous school of ancient Graeco-Buddhist art. It will not, therefore, be out of place to deal with this important aspect in a more detailed manner.

The break-up of the Empire of Asoka had the usual repercussions on the north-western province of India. The control of the central authority being weakened, renewed incursions into the Punjab by northern people took place. This time, the invaders were far advanced in civilization. The Greeks had set up an independent kingdom in Bactria and they crossed the Indian frontier and occupied Gandhara. As time went on, these Bactrian Greeks born in India were actually received into the fold of the Hindu religion. This fusion of the two people produced a remarkable synthesis of the Indo-Greek civilizations giving birth to the famous Gandhara School of art.⁴⁰

With the movement of the Kusan horde, however, Gandhara came under their sway when Kadphises II overthrew the last Greek monarch, Hermaeus. The Kusans gradually reduced to subjection the various petty Greek, Parthean and Saka kingdoms and built up an extensive empire under Kaniska. The important role that Kashmir played politically and culturally under Kaniska has already been dealt with. The Hellenised art of Gandhara appealed to the Kusans and under Kaniska it flourished, travelling to far off places in India and

Central Asia.

Long before the Greeks penetrated to this region, Gandhara had close political relations with the kingdom of Kashmir. Kalhana lays the first scenes of his immortal *Rajatarangini* there. Subsequently, we find frequent references to Gandhara and its Brahmins.⁴¹ It is recorded that Mihirakula the Ephthalite Hun king of Kashmir settled thousands of Gandharan Brahmins in Kashmir. He also tells us that the young warriors of Gandhara were in great demand for the army of Kashmir.⁴² The abundance in which the coins of Indo-Greek, Parthean and Saka kings of north-western India were found till recently in Kashmir points to the existence of considerable commercial inter-course, if not actual political connection, between the Valley and the principalities of Peshawar and Kabul in the last two centuries B.C and the first century 46 A.D.⁴³

The earliest propagation of Buddhist religion in Kashmir and *Gandhara* is attributed to the same person — Majjhantika, the great missionary sent by Moggaliputta Tissa, the religious adviser of Asoka. The kingdom of Kashmir appears in ancient records as a part and parcel of Gandhara. In the list of 16 Mahajanapadas, the Buddhist texts mention Kashmir-Gandhara as one Janapada, indicating thereby that the two countries formed one political unit in the pre-Asoka period. During Asoka's reign Kashmir and Gandhara came close together. Even after the break-up of his vast empire, the connections were maintained, alternately Gandhara becoming the vassal of Kashmir and the Punjab. King Meghavahana of Kashmir was brought from Gandhara by the nobility of Kashmir to rule over the land after the retirement of Samdhimat-Ajyaraja. That Kashmir and Gandhara continued to remain one political unit after Asoka is evidenced by the Greek records in which Kaspapyros is described as a Gandharan city. In the *Milindapanha* which was composed about the beginning of the Christian era, the two countries are compounded as Kashmir-Gandhara. There can also be no doubt that Kalhana's references to the expeditions of Kashmiri kings into the north-west frontier of India are historical facts. Heun Tsiang, when visited Taxila, found the country to be a dependency of Kashmir.

The close connections of the various Kashmiri kings with the Sahi

rulers of the Kabul valley whose capital was at Udbhandapura (modern Und) is amply proved from a study of the *Rajatarangini*. Lalitaditya gave shelter to many young princes of the later Kusan rulers of the Kabul valley and appointed them to high posts under him. In the later history of Kashmir we learn that the Kashmiri kings entered into matrimonial relations with the Sahi kings of Gandhara. Under Anantdeva (1028-63 A.D) we find several scions of that house, designated as Sahiputras or Rajaputras, in positions of great honour and power at the Kashmir court.⁴⁴ The last independent ruler of this line at Gandhara, Trilochanpala, was aided by the then king of Kashmir, Samgramaraja (1006-28 A.D) but received a crushing defeat at the hands of Mahmud Ghazni and spent the rest of his days as a refugee in Kashmir. In the 14th century Sultan Sikandar of Kashmir conquered Gandhara and married the princess of Udbhandapura whose son the celebrated Zain-ul-abidin was the Akbar of Kashmir.

With such close political and cultural ties existing between the two kingdoms of Kashmir and Gandhara, it is unimaginable that the Gandharan school of art could have developed independent of the skilled hands of the Kashmirian artists. For thousands of years past, Kashmirian artisans have been famous for the exquisite products of their artistic hands and even now their fame in this respect throughout Asia and Europe has not in any way diminished. If the Greek influences are unmistakably found in the ruins of old temples in Kashmir, the converse must also be true and the art of Gandhara must have been affected by the skill of the Kashmiri sculptor and architect. We find that excepting the unavoidable difference in the material used for the various buildings in Kashmir and Gandhara, the two are architecturally identical. The early Buddhist edifices of Kashmir have practically the same plan and probably had the same elevations as the contemporary Buddhist buildings of Gandhara.⁴⁵ As Dr. P.C. Begchi in his *India and China* observes: We have seen, that during the first period of Buddhist expansion outside India, it was the North-West, specially Gandhara and Kashmir which took the leading part. It is, therefore, quite natural that the missionaries of these two countries who went to Central Asia and China would carry with them the elements of the Indo-Greek art which was, in their own country, the only medium of

the plastic expression of their pious aspirations.

Mahayana Buddhism was responsible for the development of the Graeco-Buddhist art which found enthusiastic reception at the hands of the Chinese. Numerous Buddhist gods and goddesses — Avlokiteswar, Tara, Manjusri, Kwan-Yen, Maitreya — afforded vast field for the talented sculptors of Kashmir and Gandhara. It profoundly reacted on the plastic art of not only Central Asia and China but on that of distant Japan too.

Kaniska's Successors

It is probable that Vasiska and Huviska who were the sons of Kaniska acted as Viceroys in succession but it appears that Vasiska predeceased his father who was succeeded by Huviska in 140 A.D. Huviska was succeeded by Vasudeva also called Juska. He died about 178 A.D when the Kusan rule came to an end in Kashmir. The dynasty, however, continued to rule in Kabul and the Punjab till they were swept away by Hun invasions in the fifth century A.D. Buddhism, it seems, suffered a reverse in Kashmir after the reign of Kaniska and his immediate successors. The progress of its decline is significantly brought out by Kalhana who mentions that the Buddhists who gained a great preponderance under the benevolent care of Nagarjuna were responsible for the destruction of the traditional customs and rites of the land. This evoked the wrath of the Nagas, the tutelary deities of the Valley, who revenged themselves by causing excessive snow fall which destroyed the 'Bauddhas' and obliged the king to leave the Valley during the cold season for the lower hill tracts south of Kashmir.

Finally, according to Kalhana, a pious Brahmin, through the help of Nila Naga, the lord of Kashmir Nagas, restored the traditional cult through rites and rituals as prescribed in the *Nilamatpurana* and thereby freed the land from excessive snowfall and the plague of the Bhiksus. A repetition of this legend during the reign of Abhimanyu I, who succeeded Vasudeva alias Juska, is interesting as showing a distinctly anti-Buddhist drive in progress during his reign. Says Kalhana: At the time there manifested itself some miraculous power through which the Brahmins, who offered oblations and sacrifices, escaped destruction, while the Bauddhas perished.⁴⁶

The traditional Brahminic learning was also revived in the reign of this king, for Kalhana definitely mentions that under his instructions one Chandracarya and others "brought the *Mahabhasya*, which was at that time difficult of access (for study), into general use." Similarly the king is credited with having founded a town named Abhimanyapur (modern Bemyun near Srinagar) in which he set up a temple dedicated to the worship of Siva. This drive against Buddhism was continued during the reign of his successor Gonanda III, who finally assured the restoration of the traditional worship of the earlier cult. Gonanda III, who ruled for 35 years, was the founder of a dynasty bearing his name. His successors, Vibhisna I, Indrajit, Ravana, and Vibhisna II, are briefly mentioned as founders of a few towns and dedicators of temples.

Naga Tribe

The account given of Nara or Kimnara, the next ruler, seems more substantial. In reality, however, it consists only of an elaborated legend relating to an ancient town near Vijayeswara which local traditions surviving partly to the present day, attributed to king Nara, and which was believed to have been destroyed in a great catastrophe brought about through the king's wickedness. Kalhana's mention of ruins and the actual finds of ancient coins in the locality are indications that there once stood an old town on the banks of the Vitasta below the plateau of Chakradhara, near the modern town of Bijbihara. According to this legend King Nara, who was in the beginning of his reign a good and just king, developed towards the end Nero-like propensities. He founded a beautiful town which "was a synonym for paradise." In one of the cool ponds in the main park of the city dwelt Naga Susravas and his two beautiful daughters.

It happened that one day a poor Brahmin, Vaisakha by name came to take rest in a grove near this pond. While he was about to have some refreshments, two beautiful girls came up from the spring and apparently taking no heed of him began to hungrily eat pods of *kachidani* grass which grew in abundance there.

This amazed the Brahmin, who taking up courage inquired of them the reason for their poverty. The girls related him their sad story.

They were the daughters of Naga Susravas and even though they were entitled to a share of the rich crops growing around Kimnarapura, they could not touch it until the field-guard partook of the new harvest. But as ill luck would have it, he had taken a vow not to eat a single grain of fresh crops; hence their miserable condition.

The Brahmin boy was moved to pity. One day he stealthily put some fresh corn into the vessel in which the field-guard was cooking his food. No sooner did he partake of it than the Naga carried off, through thunder and storm, the rich harvest all around the city. The Naga was naturally grateful to the Brahmin and granted him his request to marry one of his daughters. While the happy couple were leading a peaceful life in the city, King Nara heard of the beauty of the Brahmin's wife and tried to seduce her through his emissaries. Having failed in these attempts he decided to carry her off by force. Vaisakha and his wife thereupon ran for their lives and jumped into the pond inhabited by Naga Susravas.

The Naga was infuriated. He cast thunder clouds in the sky. There was a heavy downpour and the beautiful city of Kimnarapura was destroyed together with its people, the Naga and his daughter and son-in-law then left the ruined city and created for their residence a lake of "dazzling whiteness resembling a sea of milk", which to this day is known as Sesnag. Legends like these and worship of Nagas (snakes) and springs associated with Nagas among several tribes and communities have aroused the interest of several scholars to a closer and more intensive study of their origin and extent. The historical background of Nagas has thus become an object of research. The great importance of the Nagas both in Buddhist and Brahmanical lore is reflected in plastic and pictorial art. Among the frescoes of Ajanta there are several representations of the Nagas.

According to James Fergusson, the Nagas were not originally serpents but serpent worshippers — an aboriginal race of the Turanian stock inhabiting Northern India, who were conquered by the Aryans. Dr C.F. Oldham is of the opinion that the Nagas claimed descent from the Sun and had the hooded serpent for a totem. Taksa eila (Taxila), he says, was their chief city. K.R. Subramanian in his *Origin of Shaivism* mentions that the Naga is mixed with the cult of Saivism,

and it is claimed that south Indian Saivism migrated to Northern India, leaving in the South its remnants in the Nagaras, or Nayars. The tribes of Nagas had powerful kingdoms in different parts of India.

We cannot but deduce from the stories of the Nagas, as mentioned at different places in the *Rajatarangini*, that for a very long time there raged a long and bitter struggle between them and the new settlers in Kashmir. Ultimately there seems to have been a preponderance of the Aryan immigrants who, as in other parts of India, absorbed the original inhabitants. Nara was succeeded by his son Sidha who had escaped the terrible fate of his father as he had been away from the city on its day of destruction. He is described as a very pious prince and credited with a bodily ascent to heaven. Of Utpalaksa, Hiranyaksa, Hiranyakula and Vasukula, the next four kings who are supposed to have ruled in succession from father to son, there are only the names and lengths of their reigns. Hiranyaksa appears to have traditionally figured as the founder of Hiranyapura, now a small place at the entrance of the Sindh valley.

Mihirakula and Later Huns

We reach again a record of truly historical interest in Kalhana's account of Mihirakula, the son and successor of Vasukula. The identity of Mihirakula with the Ephthalite or White Hun ruler of that name must be regarded as certain. From the epigraphical and other evidence it is seen that Mihirakula had succeeded, about 515 A.D. to his father Toramana as ruler of the wide dominion, which earlier White Hun conquests had established between the Kabul Valley and Central India.

The Hiung-nu or the Hunas of Sanskrit literature first came to view about 165 B.C. when they defeated the Yu-echi and compelled them to quit their lands in north-western China. In course of time the Huns also moved westwards, one branch proceeding towards the Oxus valley and the other section reaching Europe where they earned undying notoriety for their savage cruelties. From the Oxus the Huns turned towards the south about the second decade of the fifth century A.D. and crossing Afghanistan and north-western passes, eventually entered

India. They attacked the western parts of the Gupta dominions but were hurled back by the military strength of Skandagupta. Later the Hun hordes poured into India again after 484 A.D and under their leader Toramana were mainly responsible for the downfall of the Gupta Empire.

Mihirakula, according to Kalhana's account and as represented in Indian tradition, was a cruel tyrant, taking fiendish delight in acts of brutality. Heun Tsiang mentions this king with his capital at Sakala (Sialkot in Pakistan) as the persecutor of the peaceful Buddhists and a merciless destroyer and plunderer of their stupas and monasteries.

Mihirakula was not, however, destined to enjoy his power for long. He suffered defeat and discomfiture at the hands of two different kings, which not only put an end to his power but also to the Hun menace in the rest of India.⁴⁷ The first was Yasodharman of Malwa who routed his forces and broke his power. The second was Baladitya, the ruler of Magadha, who defeated and captured Mihirakula. After securing his release through the intercession of the queen mother, Mihirakula sought safety in Kashmir, posing as an ardent supporter of Saivas. The refugee, however, misused the kindness shown to him, and by his machinations soon seized the throne of Kashmir.

Kalhana recounting his earlier exploits mentions his campaign in South India, where he had defeated the king of Ceylon and had subjugated the territories of the chiefs of Tanjore, Karnatac, and Central Gujarat. Kalhana represents him as a cruel king whose "approach became known by the sight of vultures, crows and the like, eager to feed on those being massacred by his encircling army."⁴⁸ Mihirakula had arrived at that stage of human depravity when cruelty becomes pleasing for its own sake. While crossing the Pir Panjal pass, an elephant missed his foot and tumbled down a precipice. Its shrieks and yells while rolling down pleased the ears of this mad king and he ordered 100 more elephants to be pushed down the precipice, just to amuse himself. The place is since called Hastivanj (Sans, *hasti* — elephant, *vanjana* — destroyer).

Kalhana mentions another tradition about Mihirakula's cruelty. While diverting a canal, a large boulder stood in its way which could not be removed. The king announced that according to a dream,

which he had had that night, the boulder was the abode of a Yaksani, and it could be moved only by the touch of a chaste woman. All women of high families in the neighborhood were ordered to touch the boulder which of course could not move. It was then given out that a potter's wife, Chandravati, by her mere touch had flung the boulder away to one side. This gave the pitiless king an excuse to order massacre of thousands of helpless women, their husbands, brothers and children. "Felony", declares Kalhana in anger, "is the slaughter of living beings on a large scale, even though for a cause."

According to Kalhana there were some historians who excused his cruelties and referred to a tradition that after killing the people of Aryadesha, Mihirakula performed austere penances and earned merit by re-introducing pious observances in Kashmir, which had suffered owing to the irruption of impure Dards, Bhauttas and Mlechhas. The legend and emblems of Mihirakula's coins display an unmistakable leaning towards the Saiva cult, and thus seem to justify to some extent the above observations.

He is credited with building a shrine of Siva near Srinagar and founding a town in Holada (Vular Pargana) calling it after his own name Mihirapur. He also bestowed 1,000 *agraharas* or land grants at Vijayeswara to lower class Brahmins of Gandhara, the Brahmins of Kashmir refusing to accept them from the hands of a cruel king.

Afflicted with an exacerbating malady, Mihirakula ended his life by committing suicide. He cast himself as a libation on to a huge sacrificial fire, which he had lighted himself. A voice is said to have been heard saying that he had attained salvation, since he had shown no mercy even to himself. Whether he got salvation or not, the country at any rate got deliverance from the fiendish acts of this cruel king.

After Mihirakula's death, it is likely that he was followed by other Hun rulers. Though the Rajatarangini does not specifically mention it, some of the names recorded in it disclosed their Hun identity. Their peculiar names and the fact that most of them were ardent Saivas, show that they continued the patronage of Brahmins and succeeded to a great extent in reducing the power and influence of the Buddhists.

Baka, the son and successor of Mihirakula, is painted by Kalhana

as a virtuous prince and a great contrast to his father. He founded a Siva temple called Bakesa and built a canal. A tradition remembered as late as Kalhana's own time, attributes the death of the king to the witchcraft of a sorceress.

The next four kings, Ksitinanda, Vasunanda, Nara II, and Aksa are each disposed of with a single line, and accordingly can claim only a very shadowy existence as historical personages. All the information vouchsafed about them is that Vasunanda composed a treatise on erotics, and Aksa founded the town of Aksvala, the modern Achabal where at the foot of the famous spring lies the beautiful garden laid out by Jahangir.

Gopaditya, the next king has a greater claim to historical reality. He is credited with the building of the temple named Jyesteswara on the Gopa hill. The Gopa hill is now called Sankaracharya in Srinagar. The old name survives in the village of Gopkar situated at the foot of the hill. The ancient temple on the hill which stands to this day perhaps dates from this period, and formed part of the original temple of Jyesteswara. He donated land to Brahmins from Aryadesha near its vicinity. Aryadesha is the land of the Aryas, and refers to the indo-Gangetic plain. This is an illustration of immigration by royal invitation of Brahmins from other parts of India. He stopped the slaughter of animals 'save for sacrifices'.

Of Gokarna, the successor of Gopaditya, Kalhana has nothing to say except that he built a temple of Gokarnesa.

We must, however, recognise Khinkhila, also called Narendraditya, whom Kalhana names Gokarna's son, as the Hun ruler who calls himself Deva Sahi Khingila on his coins. He consecrated shrines to Buteswara and his spiritual guru Ugra, built a temple named Ugresa, as well as a shrine dedicated to *matricakras* or mystic symbols.

After Khinkhila, his son, Yudhisthira I, ascended the throne. He had small eyes and was, therefore, nicknamed *andha* or blind. In the beginning of his rule he was just and benevolent, but later falling a prey to pernicious influences of wicked companions, gave himself up to a course of base indulgences and debauchery. He despised the learned and his vices and crimes were numerous. As was expected, the people and the soldiery detested him and the vassal chiefs of bordering

territories became rebellious. Coming to know that the nobles of the kingdom were about to dethrone him, the king stealthily fled together with his wives across the passes to the Punjab. After some time he tried to regain his throne, but was defeated and captured, and ended his days in a prison at Durgagalika, present Drugjan at the western foot of Sankaracarya hill in Srinagar.

The six kings whose reigns are chronicled in the Second Book of the *Rajatarangini* are of different lines of descent. After Yudhisthira's dethronement, the nobles of Kashmir invited from India a relative of King Vikramaditya and crowned him as King of Kashmir under the name of Pratapaditya I. Due to internal dissensions, the kingdom, according to Kalhana, came for some time under the rule of "Harsa and other foreign kings." Pratapaditya is said to have ruled the people as lovingly as any son of the soil would.

Kalhana rejects the opinion of some earlier chroniclers who held this Vikramaditya to be identical with Vikramaditya Sakari, the traditional vanquisher of the Sakas. But he does not supply a clue that might help us to ascertain which of the several Vikramadityas was really meant. As Kalhana in the same connection mentions that Kashmir came under the rule of Harsa, we might infer that the great Harsa Vikramaditya of Ujjain who ruled in the first half of the sixth century A.D, was intended. Yet Kalhana's subsequent accounts refers to this ruler as the patron of Matrigupta. It is clear that there is some error in Kalhana's chronology. This is perhaps due to confusion caused by earlier Chroniclers who were unable to connect the local rulers with kings who ruled Kashmir from far-off centres in the rest of India through viceroys or governors. We have here a clear indication of Kashmir under the rule of Indian kings such as we must assume it to have been during more than one period preceding the commencement of authentic history in Kalhana's record.

Of Pratapaditya I and his son and successor, Jalauka's, Kalhana has otherwise nothing to say except that they ruled justly and exactly for 32 years each. Tunjina who came next had a saintly wife named Vakpusta. Both the king and the queen founded several temples and towns and were great patrons of learning and fine arts. In his time flourished the great poet Chandaka. Dramatic performances were

frequently held at the court.

Kalhana gives a graphic account of the terrible famine which took a heavy toll of life in Kashmir during Tunjina's rule. When the fields were full with ripening rice crop, an untimely snowfall in the month of Bhahun (September) completely destroyed it, resulting in a devastating famine when, in the words of the poet-historian, "the love of wife, affection for the son, loving kindness of the parent, tormented by hunger, in the anxiety of a belly-full, were forgotten by everyone."

Vakpusta founded the town of Katimusa and Ramusa and having no son of her own performed *sati* on the death of her husband Katimusa, modern Kaimuh, is a considerable village on the left bank of the Veshau—tributary of the Jhelum, 75°9' long, 33°43' lat.

The place where the king and the queen were cremated was till Kalhana's time and even later known as Vakpustatavi. A religious endowment created there by the charitable queen before her death "distributed food to multitudes of indigent people even at the present day"—records the chronicler.

Of the next king Vijaya Kalhana contents himself with recording that he belonged to another family, and that the foundation of a town surrounding the ancient shrine of Vijayeswara was due to him. His son, Jayendra, who ascended the throne after him was without a son and at his death the throne remained vacant for some time. A fanciful legend spun out in great detail about the miraculous restoration to life of Samdhimat, the pious minister, whom Jayendra had cruelly put to death, is the main theme of the account given of this king. The saintly hero of the tale is then supposed to have ascended the Kashmir throne vacated by Jayendra's death under the title of Aryaraja. He seems to be considered in the Kashmir traditions as an ideal saintly king who built shrines and whose memory till Kalhana's time was preserved in several religious endowments. Samdhimat-Aryaraja voluntarily abdicated and ended his days as a recluse at the sacred site of Siva Bhutesa.

Aryaraja's abdication which closes the Second Book of the Chronicle, was followed according to Kalhana by a restoration of Gonanda's family to the rule of Kashmir. Meghavahana, the first prince of the restored dynasty, is said to have been the son of Gopaditya,

a great-grandson of Yudhislhira, living in exile at the court of the king of Gandhara. In his youth Meghavahana had attended the *Svayamvara* of the daughter of the king of Assam and had been chosen by the bride, Amritaprabha to be her husband. His versatile genius and his calm and dignified personality eminently fitted him to discharge the duties of a king. No wonder that several myths and stories grew round his name, some of which have been reproduced by Kalhana.

There is, however, no doubt to his being influenced in his early youth by Buddhism, Gandhara being still a Buddhist stronghold. This explains his zeal in prohibiting the slaughter of animals not only in his own realm but all over India. The stories about his military expeditions to as far off places as South India and Ceylon, in order to enforce his decree, and other miraculous stories of his saving animals and human beings from sacrifice at religious places by ignorant and fanatical worshippers, only illustrate his staunch belief in the doctrine of *ahimsa* as preached by the Buddha. That popular belief in Kashmir gave them full credence is shown by the fact that certain royal banners, used still in Kalhana's time, were supposed to have been presented to Meghavahana during his expeditions by the king of Ceylon.

Meghavahana founded the town of Meghavana and also the vihara or monastery of Meghanatha. His queen Amritaprabha built a monastery named Amritbhavan for the accommodation of foreign Bhiksus. This vihara was known to Ou-kong. Her father's guru who had come from Loh (Leh) and who was designated as stonpa, constructed a stupa which came to be known as Lostunpa. Several more stupas and viharas were founded by his other queens Yukadevi, Indradevi, Khadana and Samma. All these endowments seem to rest on genuine tradition.

Meghavahana's son and successor, Sresthasena who is said to have borne also the names of Pravarasena, and Tunjana, built various sacred structures at Puranadisthana, the city founded originally by Asoka the site of which is now marked by Pandrenthan. Sresthasena had two sons, of whom the elder, Hiranya, succeeded him, while the other, Toramana, acted as Yuvaraj.

After some time, Toramana showed signs of disobedience to his brother and struck coins in his own name. Thereupon Hiranya got

offended and threw Toramana into prison. The latter's wife, Anjana, took refuge in a potter's house. She was enceinte and gave birth to a son whom she named Pravarasena, after the name of his grandfather. The potter's wife nourished him as her own child. He grew up a fine lad and the people believed him to be the potter's son.

But even in his young age he displayed signs of greatness. He used to play at king and the court and was assiduously learning to shoot at the butts. Anjana's brother, Jayendra, while in search of his sister arrived at the place where Pravarasena was playing and was struck by princely presence of the lad and by the manner in which he was playing at conducting government. He was also attracted irresistibly by his love for the boy, suspecting him, from his resemblance to his brother-in-law, to be his own nephew, and followed him in the evening to his house. Here he found his sister who related to him her misfortune. The boy on hearing the sad story of his mother and of his father being in prison, determined to grow into a strong and proficient soldier to avenge his father's incarceration.

Hiranya, at the intercession of some courtiers, released his brother, Toramana who died shortly afterwards.

Hiranya had no son and at his death the throne fell vacant. The courtiers approached King Vikramaditya Harsa of Ujjain, to take Kashmir under his protection and depute someone to conduct its administration. Some time previous to this a Brahmin of Kashmir, named Matrigupta who was a learned and pious man, had gone to Ujjain to win favour and recognition at Vikramaditya's court. He had been there for six months sitting at the palace gate. One cold winter night Vikramaditya on waking up found the palace in darkness, the lamps having gone out by the blast of the wind. He called his attendants but they were fast asleep and gave no reply. Matrigupta who was sitting up outside in the palace compound heard the king's voice and he ran in and lighted up the lamps.

A conversation is said to have taken place between Matrigupta and the king who was struck by the superior learning of the poet and was at the same time touched by his poverty. It then occurred to him to grant this poor but able man the governorship of Kashmir and so he wrote to the nobles there that Matrigupta had been appointed to

the high office. The following morning he summoned Matrigupta to his presence, gave him the royal warrant in an envelope, and told him to carry it to the nobles of Kashmir who would give him a fitting reward. The Brahmin, rather disappointed, being unacquainted with the contents of the envelope, returned to Kashmir. When he reached Surapura, the first stage in the Kashmir kingdom, he made over the envelope to the courtiers who had gone there to receive him and out went a fanfare of trumpets proclaiming Matrigupta as the governor of Kashmir.

Romantic as this story appears, which Kalhana treats as a text for many a moralising reflection; it yet furnishes us with an important historical clue in the mention of Matrigupt's royal patron. Vikramaditya-Harsa of Ujjain is subsequently mentioned by Kalhana as the father of Siladitya-Pratapasila, and the latter is undoubtedly the same King Siladitya whom Heun Tsiang knew to have ruled Malwa about 580 A.D. This indication leads us to identity Kalhana's Vikramaditya-Harsa with the famous Vikramaditya whose rule must be placed in the first half of the sixth century. It appears probable that Vikramaditya had assisted in or at least profited by the overthrow of the Ephthalite dominion. It is, therefore, possible also that he exercised that direct influence on the affairs of Kashmir which Kalhana's narrative regarding Matrigupta seems to indicate.

That Matrigupta's brief rule in Kashmir is a historical fact is proved by a poem *Hayagrivavadha* written by the poet Mentha under his patronage. We have also genuine traditions regarding Matrigupta in the references made by Kalhana to the temple of Matriguptaswamin built by him.

It was Dr Baudaji who first suggested that Matrigupta should be identified with Kalidasa, the great Sanskrit poet and dramatist. He based his theory on the assumption that "Kalidasa although a resident of Ujjain which he noticed in his works with evident predilection, was in all likelihood a native of Kashmir. He draws his illustrations chiefly from the natural history and physical geography of northern India, especially the Himalayas."

These observations of Dr Baudaji later on led Dr L.D. Kalla to conduct extensive research on Kalidasa's birthplace, which he puts in

Kashmir. Matrigupta proved a successful ruler, was just and liberal-minded, pious and tender-hearted. He also prohibited the slaughter of animals. He built at the shrine of Madhusudana a temple called Matriguptaswamin, and donated the revenue of several villages for its maintenance. His rule, however, did not last for long, as at the death of his patron he turned a recluse and repaired to Banaras to pass his remaining days there.

Pravarasena II learnt of Vikramaditya's death and of Matrigupta's abdication, in Kangra, where he was organising an army to march on Kashmir to recover the throne of his forefathers.

Heun Tsiang distinctly tells us that Siladitya was on the throne of Malwa 60 years before his own time, that is about 580 A.D which brings us to the second half of the sixth century as the approximate date of Pravarasena.

The date is indirectly confirmed by a mention of Srinagar, founded by Pravarasena and known then as Pravarapura, in the Annals of the T'ang dynasty which record that in the early part of the eighth century A.D Pravarapura was the official designation of the city. Heun Tsiang does not mention it by name but calls it the 'new city', in contradistinction to Puranadisthana, the old city of Asoka, which shows that it was then recently built.

Equally convincing evidence on Pravarasena's date is supplied by the coins bearing his name, of which rare specimens both in gold and silver are possessed. These are unmistakably older than the coins of the Karkota dynasty whose rule began early in the seventh century A.D.

Coins of Toramana, the brother of Hiranya and of par varasena disclose an affinity with those of the Kusan and Ephthalite kings and it seems that the kings of Kashmir till the end of the seven century came from a branch of, if not direct from, the little Kusans.

Pravarasena was a brave, virtuous King and ruled the country well. He proved his martial qualities by marching with a large army to the extreme south of India. Vikramaditya's son, Pratapasila, was being troubled by his enemies, but Pravarasena subdued them. The throne, *Singhasan*, which originally belonged to the ancestors of Meghavahana and afterwards had come into the possession of Vikramaditya was recovered by Pravarasena from Pratapasila. He thus shook off the

suzerainty of Ujjain. Pravarasena also led an expedition to Saurashtra and defeated its ruler. He repeatedly defeated Mummuni, the chief of a clan in Central Asia.

It is also said of Pravarasena's magnanimity that the territories he conquered, gave back to their own rulers and deprived none of his inheritance. He made his name immortal by founding the city of Pravarasenagar, now called Srinagar (the capital of Kashmir). Pravarasena died after reigning for 60 years. It is said that he bodily ascended to heaven while worshipping in his temple, Pravaresa.

Yudhisthira II, his son from his queen Ratnaprabha, now ascended the throne. His ministers, named Sarvaratana, Jaya and Skandagupta, erected *viharas* and *caityas*. Another minister of his was Vajrendra, who built caityas and other shrines at the village of Bhavachheda. Kumarasena, his chief minister was a distinguished statesman.

Of Narendraditya, also called Lakhana, the son of Yudhisthira II from his queen Padmavati, we only know that he established a system of keeping records and built the temple of Narendraswamin. The addition of Lakhana's his second name shows again the close relationship of the kings to the Little Kusans.

Lakhana-Narendraditya's rule is, according to Kalhana, followed by the fantastically long reign of Ranaditya. He is said to have ruled for three hundred years. Hasan, however, on the authority of *Ratnakarpurana* says that actually six rulers were on the throne of Kashmir during this period, namely Tunjina, Sarabsena, Gandharsena, Lachmana, Suraka, and Vajraditya. But Hasan has nothing more to mention about their reigns than some mythical and fanciful stories.

About Ranaditya also Kalhana has only to record some historical traditions in the few references to shrines and other sacred objects, which are attributed to him. The exploits of the King in the nether world and the wooing of his wife Ranarambha in an earlier life are some of the fanciful stories related by him.

The hero of so many marvellous tales is said to have been followed to the throne of Kashmir by his son Vikramaditya. Of his long reign of 41 years nothing is related but the foundation of some sacred buildings no longer traceable. Baladitya, Vikramaditya's younger brother, succeeded him. His three younger brothers, Khankha,

Shatrugan and Malava were his three ministers and they built a vihara, a temple and an embankment respectively. His queen Bimba built the shrine of Siva Bimbeshwara at Aristotsadana.

He had a beautiful daughter, named Anangalekha. An astrologer foretold that with his death would end his dynasty, his son-in-law wearing his crown after him. The king did not like the idea of his being succeeded by the descendants of his daughter and tried to defeat Fate. He thought that a menial could never become a king and, therefore, married his daughter to the keeper of his horses, named Durlabhavardhana. Durlabhavardhana was, however, a born prince, being a son of Naga Karkota, which fact the king did not know. He was shrewd and clever. His qualities enabled him to attain distinction and the king bestowed on him the title of Prajnaditya and also much wealth. But Anangalekha, evidently thinking him a low class man, did not like him as her husband and, therefore, did not remain faithful to him.

She had infamous connection with the Minister Khankha. One day Durlabhavardhana saw his own wife and Khankha together in her inner place and he naturally became enraged and wanted to kill them both there and then. But he soon reflected and regained his self-control, thinking that if he killed them, the matter would become known to the public and his own honour would be lost. He wrote down upon the sleeping minister's garment that he had intended to kill him for his vile and detestable deed but had deliberately let him off. Having written this Durlabhavardhana went away. When Khankha woke up and read the words on his clothes, he repented and desisted from such deeds in future. He never forgot the noble mindedness of Durlabhavardhana and his forgiving nature and was anxious to repay his kindness. He did it by helping him to ascend the throne of his father-in-law with whose death we come to the end of the Gonanda line of the kings of Kashmir and the Third Book of Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*

With the accession of Durlabhavardhana (625-661 A.D) to the throne of Kashmir, Kalhana's history assumes an authentic character and gives more detailed and reliable information about the dynasties that ruled from the seventh century A.D to his own time (1149

A.D). From here onwards we can check the majority of the recorded royal names from coins or foreign notices, and the chronology too becomes, within certain limits, reliable.

Durlabhavardhana's coins bearing the name of Durlabhadeva and showing a type of bold but rude execution which characterises all the known issues of rulers of this dynasty, have been found in the Valley. We have possibly a reference to him in the Chinese Annals which mention Tu-lo-pa as a king of India, who controlled the route from China to Ki-pin (Kabul valley) between 627-49 A.D.

It is probable that Heun Tsiang visited the Valley during his rule. From his accounts it appears that the founder of the dynasty had already set out on a policy of expanding the territories of his kingdom, for Taxila east of the Indus, Urusha or Hazara, Simphapura or the Salt Range with the smaller states of Rajapuri (Rajauri) and Paranotsa (Poonch) had no independent rulers but were tributary to Kashmir. Of Taxila, particularly, we are told that it had been subjugated at a recent date.⁵³ Heun Tsiang found all adjacent territories on the west and south of the Valley down to the plains, subject to the sway of the king of Kashmir.

Beyond this Heun Tsiang's account does not contain any reference to the political condition of the kingdom. But a closer study reveals that peace and prosperity prevailed and though Buddhism claimed a large number of adherents and the king was well inclined towards the Buddhist priests, it was not the dominant faith. The building of temples of Brahmanical denomination had already started and these were "the sole thought of the people" then.

This is corroborated by the *Rajatarangini* which mentions the building of temples by the queen and the princes as also grant, by the king, of villages to Brahmins in the southern districts of the Valley.

Durlabhavardhana ruled, according to Kalhana, for 36 years. The chronology of the Karkota dynasty is, however, a subject of much controversy. Kalhana's dates are given in the Laukika era which can exactly be worked out with reference to the Christian era. Kalhana, however, does not give the date of accession of the kings of this dynasty, but only the length of their reigns. We have therefore to calculate the dates of accession backwards from Cippatajayapida, a

later Karkota king, whose death is recorded to have occurred in the Laukika year 3889 or 813 A.D. Calculating backwards from this date, Durlabhavardhana's accession would have taken place in 600 A.D.

The chronology of the Karkota dynasty would thus be: Durlabhavardhana, 600-636, Pratapaditya II, 636-686, Chandrapida, "686-694, Tarapida, 694-699, Muktapida, 699-736, Kuvalyapida 736-737, Vajraditya, 737-744, Prithvyapida, 744-748, Sangramapida, 748, Jajja, 748-751, Jayapida, 751-782, Lalitapida, 782-794, Sangramapida -II, 794-801, Cippatajayapida, 801-813, Ajitapida, 813-850, Anangapida, 850-853, Utpalapida, 853-855.

This chronology of the Karkotas could perhaps be accepted, at least for working purposes, but it is seriously contradicted by the entries in Chinese Annals of the T'ang dynasty. We find a discrepancy of at least 25 years and hence Dr Stein has come to the conclusion that the dates of the rulers of this dynasty should be advanced by a similar number of years.

This, however, leads to another difficulty, as then the rule of the dynasty would be dragged down to 880 A.D when we know for certain that Avantivarman was ruling in Kashmir. The only explanation would, therefore, be that Kalhana has given a longer reign to some kings of this dynasty; and hence the problem.

After Durlabhavardhana's death, his son, Pratapaditya II (661-711 A.D) ascended the throne. His coins bear the legend Sri-Pratapa. The fact that several coins of this type were found in the Banda District of Uttar Pradesh and other places in India, shows the political and economic relations that Kashmir had developed under the Karkotas with the kingdoms in these parts of India.

Pratapaditya founded a new town of Pratapapura, present Tapar, 29 kilometres to the west of Srinagar. Recent excavations at this place have revealed the foundations of large temples and buildings.

Apart from the mention of the founding of this town, Kalhana only relates of Pratapaditya the romantic episode of his marriage with Narendraprabha, previously the wife of a rich merchant from Rohtak named Nona, who was settled in Kashmir. Narendraprabha bore the king three sons, Chandrapida, Tarapida, and Muktapida, who were

also known by the names of Vajraditya, Udayadiiya, and Lalitaditya Chandrapida (711-719 A.D), his eldest son, succeeded Pratapaditya. He is mentioned in the Chinese Annals as ruling over Kashmir in 713, and was powerful enough to be recognised as king by the Chinese emperor in 719-20.

We learn from the annals of the T'ang dynasty that king Tchen-Io-pi-li of Kashmir who so identity with Chandrapida has been recognised by Klaproth, sent in 713, an embassy to the Chinese court to invoke its aid against the Arabs who were threatening his territories far to the north. A similar request had previously been made by the king of Khokand for aid against the Tibetans and Arabs who were advancing to attack him. The Emperor had sent an army to his succour and the aggressors had been completely defeated. We do not know how Chandrapida's request was answered but it is learnt that about the year 720 he was at his request granted the title of King on the Imperial Roll. It was, however, between 736-47 A.D that the Chinese Emperor Yuen-Tsung (713-56A.D) an enlightened prince, directly brought his victorious armies on to the soil of the territories of the Kashmir king. His army came via Kashghar, captured Gilgit and occupied Baltistan.

Chandrapida was renowned for his piety and justice. Kalhana records that when the king began to build a temple, a leather-tanner refused to give up his hut which lay on the site. When the matter was reported to the king, he considered his own officers to be at fault, not the tanner. "Stop the building", he cried out, "or have it erected elsewhere." The tanner came himself to the king and represented that since his birth the hut had been to him like a mother, a witness of good and evil days, and he could not bear to see it pulled down. Still he agreed to part with it, provided the king himself came to his hut and asked "for it in accordance with propriety." The king agreed and went to the tanner's hut and there bought it up from the owner.

The reign of this king was full of just acts like this, and he may almost be said to have fallen a martyr to them. Once he punished a Brahmin who had secretly murdered another Brahmin by means of witchcraft. The former felt deep wrath over his punishment and was instigated by the king's younger brother, Tarapida, to use his witchcraft

against the king. When the king was on his deathbed, the Brahmin's witchcraft became known but the king forgave him, saying that he was only a tool in the hands of his ambitious brother. Thus died the noble king Chandrapida after a reign of eight years and a half.

Hie Rajatarangini mentions the founding of temples by his queen, Prakasnadevi and by his guru Mihiradatta as well as by his minister Calitaka Tarapida (719-724 ad) then ascended the throne. His inglorious rule of four years was full of cruel and bloody deeds. Cities and towns were deserted by the oppressed inhabitants who fled to forests and hills to escape the rapacious deeds of the king and his minions.

NOTES

1. The Hindustan Times Late City Edition, Oct. 11, 1989, p.3
2. Bamzai, History, p. 68.
3. Alberuni, India translated by Sachau, p. 206 sqq.
4. Jonaraja, Tr. By Jogesh Chunder Dutt, p. 57.
5. Stein, trans. Of Rajatarangini, Vol. II, pp. 429-32.
6. R.S. Tripathi History of Ancient India, pp. 47, 82, 84.
7. Herodotus I, pp. 152—177.
8. Diodorus would, however, have us believe that Embisares (Abhisares) had made an alliance with Porus and was preparing to oppose Alexander (XVII, 87, *ibid*, p. 247).
9. M' Crindle, *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great*, pp. 69 and 111—12
10. R.S. Pandit, *River of Kings*, p. 470.
11. Sukseletra (modern Hukaletar, 74° 42' long. 34° lat.) seems to have a favourite place for Buddhist constructions, for Kalhana later mentions Kaniska also to have built stupas and viharas in the locality.
12. Vitasttra (modern Vethavotur, 75° 15' long. 30° 33' lat.) is the traditional source of the Vitasta at Verinag and is an ancient place of pilgrimage.

13. Asoka's Srinagar was built at Pandrenthan (ancient Puranadhisthana—old capital), five kilometers to the south of present Srinagar.
14. The famous old shrine of Siva Vijayeswara has given its name to the town of Vijayabror (modern Bijbihara) Two temples built by Asoka were known in the time of Kalhana (12th century AD)
15. The worship of Siva Bhutesa localized near the sacred sites of Mount Harmukata has played an important art in the ancient religion of Kashmir.
16. Vassilyev, *Der Buddhism*, I—44.
17. Sir Charles Eliot, *Hinduism & Buddhism*, p. 263.
18. Bodhisatvas are exalted beings who have reached Buddhahood, but who deliberately decline to enter into nirvana in order that they might devote themselves to saving mankind. *Rawlinson, India*.
19. Sir M. Monier Willams, *Buddism in its connexion with Brahmanism and Hinduism*, p. 173.
20. Note Valid
21. For explanation of "eighteen traditional Departments of State" see Pandit, *River of Kings*, p. 19.
22. Stein, trans, of *Rajatarangini*, p. 29.
23. Tarn, *Greeks in Bactria and India*, p. 155.
24. *Milindapanha*, ed. Trenckner, pp. 82, 83.
25. Coins of the Indo-Scythians, p. 44.
26. For notice of the historical data relating to these early Indo-Scythian rulers compare Von Gutschmid in *Encycle. Brit.* Xviii, p. 606, Drouin *Le Rois Indo-Scybe*, Ip. 46.
27. Three interesting gold coins of the Kusans similar to Kusan coins of Kashmir were discovered in the Rajshahi Division, Bengal. (JASB, Vol. XXVIII p. 130).
28. Eliot, op cit.
29. W.W. Huunter in *Ancient India*, p. 161.
30. Eliot, of. Cit
31. Smith, *Early History of India*, P. 283.
32. *life*, Translated by Beal.

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33. Ibid.
34. Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels*.
35. Stein, *Ancient Khoten*.
36. Dr. P.c. Bagchi, *India and China*.
37. William Gemmel in his translation of the *Diamond Sutra* says that Kumarajiva was a native of Kashmir.
38. to 40 not valid
41. *Life of Heun Tsiang* translated by Beal' Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels*, and Rene Grousset, *In the Footsteps of the Buddha*.
42. Watters, *On Yuan chwang's Travels*, I—pp. 258-59.
43. Rawlinson, *India_A Shrot Cultural History*
44. *Rajatarangini*, I – 66, 68, 307; ii – 145.
45. *R. C. Pandit*, *River of Kings*, p. 615.
46. R.C. Kak, *Ancient Monuments in Kashmir*, p. 52.
47. Compare *Rajatarangini* viii — 144, 178, 274. Among the wives of King Harsa there were Vasantalekha and other Sahi prinbcesses. Vii —956, 1470.
48. R. C. Kak, *Ancient Monuments in Kashmir*.
49. *Rajatarangini*, i. —181.
50. R.C. Majumdar, *Ancient India*, pp. 254-55.
51. *Rajatarangini*, I-291.

CHAPTER: 3

The Karkota Empire

The founder of the Karkota Dynasty was Durlabhavardhana. But his origin is shrouded in mystery. According to Kalhana, he was the son of Karkola Naga, a legendary figure among the Nagas who were among the early inhabitants of Kashmir. It is because of this reason that the dynasty by him came to be known as Karkota.

While this account would suggest Durlabhavardhana's connection at least with the Naga clan, some scholars doubt it altogether and point out that it has been fabricated to conceal his lowly origin. According to them, he was, perhaps, an outsider and belonged to the Vaisha caste, though the probability of his being a Kshatriya is not ruled out.

No less legendary are the circumstances given of his rise to power. It is said that king Baladitya had only a daughter Anagalekha. An astrologer told him that his dynasty would come to an end with him and that his son-in-law would then become the master of the land. But the king did not relish these consequences, and determined to defeat the Fate. Accordingly, he cast his eyes around, and chose one of his petty officials, Durlabhavardhana, the keeper of his horses, to become the son-in-law, thinking that he would have not even the ghost of a chance to sit on the throne. But it so happened that Anagalekha, who was a woman of easy virtue, came to have illicit relations with Khankha, a minister of her father. One day, Durlabhavardhana caught both of them red handed. But he let them off, warning the minister, however, "Remember that you have not been

slain, though deserving of death." The grateful Khankha not only mended his evil ways, but also threw his weight in favour of Durlabhavardhana's succession after Baladitya ended his days.

Whatever the facts, with the accession of the Karkotas, we enter an important stage in the history of Kashmir. From now onwards, it becomes possible for us to verify the names of a majority of its kings, given by Kalhana, from other sources. Our chronicler's chronology also becomes more reliable hereafter. It is in view of these facts that the date of accession of Durlabhavardhana is accepted by most of the historians as 625 A.D.

An important event of his reign was the visit of Hieun-Tsang, the well-known Chinese pilgrim. He came here in 631 A.D and was received by the king's maternal uncle as soon as he reached near the capital. With a view to according to pilgrim a royal reception outside the city, the king also left his palace, in the company of about one thousand of his nobles, Buddhist monks and other men of note.

Brought on an elephant, Hieun-Tsang was lodged for one night in a monastery and then in the palace itself. Besides five attendants, a band of twenty writers was placed at his disposal for the copying of manuscripts.

While in the Valley, he visited all the important places of Buddhism. In about two years, he finished his work and then left it.

In his account, Hieun-Tsang says that the beautiful Valley of Kashmir produced abundant fruits and flowers, saffron and some medicinal plants; there were one hundred Buddhist monasteries, four Asokan chaityas, each containing about a pint (Sheng) of the bodily relics of the Budha and about five thousand Buddhist monks.

The character of the people of Kashmir also came under his observation. He writes, "they were volatile and timid...they were good-looking but deceitful; they were fond of learning and had a faith which embraced orthodoxy and heterodoxy," i. e, Buddhism and other religions.

Hieun-Tsang also leaves us in no doubt about the fact that the kingdom of Kashmir was then quite vast, with its territories extending deep into the Panjab. According to him, Ta-cha-shi-lo (Taxila), Seng-ha-pu-lo (Simhapura or the Salt Range), Wu-la-Shih-lo (Urasa or

Hazara), Pan-nu-tso (Poonch) and Ha-lo-she-pul-lo (Rajouri) formed parts of it.

The Chinese pilgrim further records that king Hars-havardhana of Kanauj forcibly took away the sacred tooth relic of Budha from the ruler of Kashmir. The king of Kanauj (606-47A.D) was undoubtedly a powerful monarch whose kingdom, after the fall of the Guptas, incorporated a major part of the sub-continent. But the evidence of Hieun-Tsang in no way indicates that Kashmir also was under his control. "It is high time," says a modern historian, "to abandon very exaggerated notion of Harsa's sovereignty extending up to Kashmir."

Adding further to our knowledge, the Chinese Annals state that a king named Tu-lo-pa controlled the route from 627 to 649 A.D, and held the charge of ensuring the safe conduct of the Chinese envoy from Kabul (Kipin) to Kashmir. As Tu-lo-pa is identified with Durlabhavardhana, this evidence also goes to show that Kashmir was a powerful kingdom at this period of time.

PRATAPADITYA

Durlabhavardhana seems to have died some time in 661 A.D. His son, Durlabhaka, then ascended the throne under the title of Pratapaditya II. Several of his coins, bearing the legend Sripratapa, have been discovered. Pratapap-ura, modern Tapar, about eighteen miles (29 kms) to the west of Srinagar, was founded by him. Charmed by the wife of his friend, Nona, a merchant of Rohtak settled at Srinagar, he is said to have married her after her divorce.

CANDRAPIDA

Pratapaditya was succeeded by his eldest son, Chandrapida, in 711 or 713 A.D. By this time, the Arabs had made rapid encroachments on the Central Asian Khanates of Tashkand, Samarkand, Bukhara and Turkistan, and had, possibly, reached up to the frontiers of Kashmir. Frightened, Chandrapida, or Chen-to-lo-pi-li of the Annals of the Tang Dynasty, is said to have sent an embassy to the Chinese Court in 713 with a view to seeking assistance against the Arabs. Hiuen-Tsung (712-56), the Chinese emperor, was a powerful potentate of his

time. Not only had he dealt a crushing blow to the advancing Turkish borders, but had also subjugated Tibet. But there is no evidence of his positive response to the request from Kashmir. In 720, however, when another envoy from Kashmir put up his appearance in the Chinese Court, it is said that "an edict was issued appointing Chen-to-lo-pi-li as its king."

Chandrapida be said to have fallen a martyr to them. Once he punished a Brahmin who had secretly murdered another Brahmin by means of witchcraft. The former felt deep wrath over his punishment and was instigated by the king's younger brother, Tarapida, to use his witchcraft against the king. When the king was on his deathbed, the Brahmin's witchcraft became known but the king forgave him, saying that he was only a tool in the hands of his ambitious brother. Thus died the noble king Chandrapida after a reign of eight years and a half.

The Rajatarangini mentions the founding of temples by his queen, prakashdevi and by his guru Mihiradatta as well as by his minister Calitaka. Tarapida (719-724 AD) then ascended the throne. His inglorious rule of four years was full of cruel and bloody deeds. Cities and towns were deserted by the oppressed inhabitants who fled to forests and hills to escape the rapacious deeds of the king and his minions.

Lalitaditya (724—761)

Lalitaditya, the third son of Pratapaditya II who ascended the throne after Tarapida, is chiefly known to history as a great conqueror. His reign of 37 years was marked by exploits of conquest and many expeditions, for he was essentially a tireless warrior and a great conqueror. Like Alexander the Great, Lalitaditya had a desire for world conquest which could not be allayed, and Kalhana thus lays bare the king's ambitious mind in his own words: *For rivers which have set cut from their own region the ocean is the limit but nowhere is there a limit for those who are frankly aspiring to be conquerors.*

Lalitaditya gave wide extent to his dominions. The Punjab, Kanauj, Tibet, Badakshan and other territories are said to have been brought into subjection by him. His attitude towards the subjugated kings

and peoples was magnanimous and munificent; and, though his prolonged wars of conquest, like those of Alexander, at times damped the enthusiasm of his war-weary soldiers, this brave general had the knack of enkindling it again. In this regard Kalhana writes: *Though disliked by the Generals who were uneasy at the prolonged duration of the war the king thought highly of his demand of strict observance of forms!*

Lalitaditya ushered in an era of glory and prosperity for the kingdom. He was tolerant towards all schools of religious thought. Buddhism and Brahmanism, the two prominent creeds of the time, received patronage at the hands of this ruler who constructed temples for the Buddha as well as for Siva, Visnu and other gods. The king liberally patronised men of letters, and several viharas, where learning flourished a good deal, were set up. Kashmir became the synagogue of foreign scholars and erudites, and many cultural missions sent from other Countries were received with respect.

During his reign public services were re-organised and new buildings were constructed. Irrigational facilities were afforded to the cultivators and relief measures were adopted in times of unforeseen calamity. Charitable institutions, where the poor and the needy were fed every day were also set up. Many towns were founded during his long reign and he built the world famous Martand Temple. This and the few remnants of the ruins in Parihaspura testify to the splendour and massiveness with which the age moved. The kingdom was indeed at the zenith of its glory.

Before giving any detailed account of Lalitaditya's various expeditions it would be better to know the political set-up of the times and the influence upon it of the conditions prevailing beyond the frontiers of the kingdom of Kashmir.

In the South Asia of the early eighth century the times were out of joint. In northern India the Gupta empire and civilization, which three centuries earlier was at its zenith, was in its decline. As in the late Roman Empire, one ambitious general after another tried to unite the smaller kingdoms, but their rule did not last long and none was able to establish any real authority. In the Deccan the Pallava empire was fading out and that of Chalukyas of Badami dying of military exhaustion. The later powers, the Gurjara-Pratiharas, the Rashtrakutas,

the Palas of Bengal, had not yet emerged.

In the west the Sasanian empire had collapsed in 637-42, but its Muslim conquerors had just reached Sind (712 A.D) and not yet penetrated the Afghan mountains and the Punjab.

In the north the Chinese under the T'angs had slowly but gradually extended their dominions to the west and at about Durlabhavardhana's time the Chinese Emperor Tai-Tsung had conquered Kucha, Khotan, Khorasan and Kashghar. But the Emperors had lost control over the provinces and the moment of the break up of the empire was near.

Towards the south, Kashmir territories were in close proximity to the Kingdom of Kanauj, which under Harsavardana had acquired extensive territories and fame. During Lalitaditya's reign Kanauj was ruled by Yasovarman who, though having gained several victories over kingdoms to the south and east of Kanauj could not compete with the power and resources of the Karkotas.

In this vacuum Lalitaditya built up his ephemeral empire. The Rajatarangini is silent about his early life, but it can easily be concluded that being the youngest of the three sons of King Pratapaditya II, he must have undergone a thorough schooling in the art of state-craft under his father and his two brothers. He had already seen a great contrasting rule of his immediate predecessor and it must have brought home to him the lesson of such a suicidal policy for both the king and the people.

He was no doubt the scion of an energetic warlike dynasty, but without the Chinese political and military advice and military technique, then far superior to those of their neighbours, his extraordinary career might perhaps not have been possible. It seems that his army was mainly recruited from the north and most of his generals, including his commander-in-chief, Cankunya, also came from the same region. It appears that due to the decline of the Tang rule, the Kashmir ruler attracted many an adventurer and Lalitaditya was not slow in taking advantage of their experience and martial abilities. For instance, it is clear that Cankunya must have acquired fame as a military commander even before he joined the services of Lalitaditya since he bore the Chinese title of Can-kiun — General.

The political condition of north-western India at that time seems to have been too obscure to permit a guess now as to the circumstances, which would account for hostilities between the rulers of Kashmir and distant Kanauj. However, it can easily be presumed that Lalitaditya had already under him the territories comprising the districts of Kangra and the province of the Punjab. When Lalitaditya led his great army across the fertile plains of the Punjab, it recorded that the entire population submitted to his rule gladly and without any resistance. Yasovarman at first submitted peacefully but during the drafting of the final treaty a hitch was created when hostilities were resumed and he was dethroned and the whole territory brought under the direct rule of the Kashmir king.

By that victory Lalitaditya not only made himself master of Kanauj, but also acquired the theoretical right of suzerainty over the vast conquests of Yasovarman. In order to effectively assert these rights, Lalitaditya marched towards the east attacking king Jivitagupta of Bihar and West Bengal (Gauda) and reducing him to vassalage, advanced up to the sea coast of Orissa.

At this moment (cir. 735-36 a.d.) a call for help reached Lalitaditya from the Deccan. Indra I Rashtrakuta had abducted the Chalukya princess Bhavagana from Khaira (Gujarat) and forced her to marry him. After his death in 735 a.d., the 'Ratta queen' was soon in difficulties. With her secret connivance Lalitaditya crossed the passes into the Deccan without resistance, found the Chalukyas friendly allies and overran the Rashtrakuta territories. Karka II (Kakka, Kayya) of Lata (Southern Gujarat) was brought to Kashmir. On his way home Lalitaditya passed through Gujarat, Kathiawar, Malwa and Marwar, shaking the tottering power of the Maitrakas of Valabhi and of the Mauryas of Chitorgarh.¹ These extensive conquests made the kingdom of Kashmir, for the time being, the most powerful empire that India had seen since the days of the Guptas.²

After gaining these outstanding victories in the south, Lalitaditya turned his attention to the territories bordering on the north of Kashmir. As mentioned, his kingdom extended to the farthest point in the Karakoram range controlling the overland caravan routes from India to China. We know that Arab invasion was threatening the

Kabul valley already from the commencement of the eighth century and that simultaneously the Muhammadan power in Sind was making efforts to advance north-wards.³ While the Sahi rule in Kabul and Gandhara was exposed to these attacks, Lalitaditya may well have found an opportunity to extend his authority in the direction of the Indus. He led a victorious army through the Dard Desha (Dardistan) to the Tukhara country (Tukharistan of the later historians). The whole region was then thoroughly imbued with the Kashmiri traditions and learning, thanks to the efforts of the numerous Kashmiri monks and the Kashmiri settlements in the various Central Asian cities. It cannot therefore be difficult to understand that the Kashmir armies under Lalitaditya gained an easy victory there. The Chinese Empire under which they had come, was falling to pieces due to the end of the Tang rule and the internal civil wars and dissensions.

At about this time, there is evidence to show, the Tibetans had acquired sufficient power to be capable of aggression towards the west and the east. Lalitaditya therefore turned his forces against the Tibetans in Ladakh and beyond. Ladakh was easily brought under subjugation and many victories were also gained against the Tibetans. These victories were celebrated not only during the time of Lalitaditya but even long afterwards. Kalhana records that in his time the victories were annually celebrated and Alberuni mentions that the Kashmiris observed the second of Chaitra as a day of Lalitaditya's victory over the Tibetans.⁴

It was due to his intention to completely subjugate the Tibetans that Lalitaditya sent his famous embassy to the Chinese court. The Chinese Annals mention that U-Ii -to the ambassador of Mo-to-pi (Muktapida) the king of Kashmir, came to the Chinese court to seek aid from the Emperor against the common enemy, the Tibetans. That Lalitaditya should have endeavored to enlist the friendship of the powerful Chinese king Yuen Tsun is natural enough seeing that the Tibetan expansion threatened the Chinese kingdom too. U-Ii-to requested an alliance between the Chinese Emperor and Lalitaditya against the Tibetans and the despatch of a Chinese auxiliary force which was to encamp in the midst of his country on the shores of the Mahapadma lake (the Wular). He offered to find provisions for an army of 200,000 men and reported that in alliance with the king of

Central India he had blocked all the five routes to Tibet. The Kashmirian envoy mentioned also the great success his king had achieved against the Tibetans in all his previous campaigns. But apart from receiving the embassy in a very courteous and hospitable manner the Chinese Emperor does not seem to have found his way to accepting the proposal, perhaps due to the tact that the Emperor was himself involved in quelling a rebellion raised by General Can Lab-Shan, an officer of Turkish descent, in consequence of which he had ultimately to flee from his capital.

Lalitaditya had therefore to undertake the subjugation of the Tibetans all alone. The Rajataranginī mentions a few expeditions, but apart from the definite conclusion that Ladakh and some western provinces of Tibet were brought under the sway of the Kashmir king, the complete overthrow of the Tibetans is rather doubtful. But the adventuring spirit of Lalitaditya always led him into new countries and tight situations. Once he was lured into the sand deserts of Central Asia by the wily king of that country and finding his army without water for a number of days was about to perish when accidentally a spring of fresh water was discovered which not only gave a new lease of life to him and his followers, but fanned his vindictive desire to punish the king.

Lalitaditya, not being satisfied with his conquests, set out on new expeditions and in one of them lost his life. Kalhana mentions two legends about his death which were current in his own time. Both of them agree in connecting it with a distant expedition on the north. According to one version Lalitaditya perished through excessive snow in a country called Aryanaka (modern Afghanistan). Another version made him end his life by suicide in order to escape being captured when separated from his army and blocked on a difficult mountain route. The military exploits of Lalitaditya have naturally received greater prominence in the various accounts of his reign and have made him a hero to the Kashmiris of later periods. But his great works of architecture and public good and his intense love of learning, patronage of scholars and his great virtues as a humane conqueror are some of the qualities which should have, independent of his conquests, ranked him among the greatest kings of Kashmir.

The Valley had been till then subjected to constant floods due to the silting up of the bed of the river at Baramula and Lalitaditya was the first king to realise that by clearing the bed of rocks and silt, the flow of water would be accelerated and thus the water level would fall in other parts of the Valley. He was thus the foreunner of the great engineer of Avantivarman, Suyya. Lalitaditya got the passage cleared and thus vast areas of swamps were reclaimed for purposes of cultivation. Similarly he raised bunds round low-lying lands making them fit for growing crops. He also built numerous irrigation canals and Kalhana mentions that he erected water-wheels for lifting water to the Chajkradara and other karewas for irrigation purposes. The cumulative effect of these works was that the production of crops increased adding greatly to the well-being and prosperity of the people.

Lalitaditya and his queens founded numerous towns. He built the towns of Suniscatapur and Darpitapur in commemoration of his foreign expeditions. There are, however, no traces of these towns now. He also built the two towns of Phalapura and Parontsa. The former may now be traced to a village near Shadipur and the latter is the town now called Poonch, the capital of the illaqa of the same name. He is also credited with the founding of the town of Lalitapura (modern Letapur) at which place he built a large temple. At Hushkapura (modern Ushkur), he is said to have built a big vihara and a Buddhist temple. It may be mentioned that this vihara served as the resting place of a later Chinese traveller Ou-kong who has given a grand picture of it. Lalitaditya is also recorded to have founded a town at Lokpunya (modern Lokabhavan on the Anantnag-Verinag road). This town gained great importance as the headquarters of a group of feudal landlords (Damaras) in the later history of Kashmir. But the two outstanding constructions of Lalitaditya which have made his name immortal and added a lustre to the artistic and architectural abilities of Kashmiris are the temple of Martand and the city of Parihaspura. It is no longer possible, to trace with certainty the cities and remains of all the towns and structures which owed their existence to Lalitaditya. But those among them which can be identified justify by their extant ruins the great fame which Lalitaditya enjoyed as a builder. The ruins of the splendid temple of Martand which the king had constructed

near the Tirtha of the same name, are still the most striking object of ancient Hindu architecture in the Valley. Even in their present state of decay they command admiration both by their imposing dimensions and by the beauty of their architectural design and decoration.⁵

Among the great architectural specimens of the world, Martand occupies a very high place. It is not only typical of Kashmir architecture at its best but is built on the most sublime site occupied by any building in the world — finer far than the site of the Parthenon, or of the Taj, or of St. Peters, or of the Escorial — we may take it as the representative or rather the culmination of all the rest and by it we must judge the Kashmir people at their best. Younghusband, in his *Kashmir* continues: On a perfectly open and even plain, gently sloping away from a background of snowy mountains looking directly out on the entire length both of the smiling Kashmir Valley and of the snowy ranges which bound it — so situated in fact as to be encircled, yet not overwhelmed by, snowy mountains — stand the ruins of a temple second only to the Egyptian in massiveness and strength and to the Greek in elegance and grace. It is built of immense rectilinear blocks of limestone, betraying strength and durability. Its outline and details are bold, simple and impressive. And any overweighing sense of massiveness is relieved by the elegance of the surrounding colonnade of graceful Greek like pillars. It is but a ruin now, but yet, with the other ruins so numerous in the Valley and similar in their main characteristics, it denotes the former presence in Kashmir of a people worthy of study. No one without an eye for natural beauty would have chosen that special site for the construction of a temple and no one with an inclination to the ephemeral and transient would have built it on so massive and enduring a scale.⁶

The temple of Martand set the model for Kashmiri Hindu art in all the following centuries. Thus Lalitaditya must be regarded as the founder not only of a short-lived empire, but also of six centuries of Kashmiri Hindu art.⁷

An even more impressive proof of the grand scale on which Lalitaditya's building operations were conducted, is afforded by the remains marking the site of the city of Parihaspura near the present Shadipur. It is a karewa just opposite the junction of the Sindh river.

with the Jhelum, high and dry above all floods and marshes. And it stands well away from the mountain ranges on either hand, right out in the centre of the Valley so that all the higher peaks and the complete circle of snowy mountains may be seen. A nobler site could not be found and the few ruins found there in 1892 by Stein are an ample proof of the massive nature of the great buildings that must have existed there. Kalhana describes at length the series of great temples built by the king at this town. The extensive, though much injured, ruins with which I was able to identify these structures at the site of Parihaspura the present Paraspur, show sufficiently that Kalhana's account of their magnificence was not exaggerated.⁸

After the reign of Lalitaditya, Parihaspura passed through many vicissitudes, which explains the utter decay of the ruins therein. His son Vajraditya removed the royal residence from there and later the drainage operations of Suyya brought the confluence of the Vitasta and Sindhu from Prihaspura to Shadipur which naturally affected the importance of the town. Sankarvarman (883-901) used the materials of Parihaspura for building his new town at Pattan and Harsa (1089-1101) seized and melted some of the gold and silver images of the temples still existing therein. In the subsequent civil wars the whole town was burned down. Lalitaditya's greatness is depicted by his extreme sense of toleration to the religious beliefs of his subjects, and his generosity towards the peoples and kings subjugated by him. Although a follower of the Hindu religion he showed equal respect to the Buddhists and founded many Buddhist monasteries and temples. His commander-in-chief was a buddhist and so were many of the high officials. To talented persons of all nationalities he showed great respect and regard and being a patron of learning many of the famous learned men of India and other countries came to his court. He brought from Kanauj the two famous poets Bhavabhuti and Vakpatiraja after Yasovarman's defeat and gave them the honour and respect due to them by installing them in his capital in Kashmir. Kalhana, however, does not conceal the king's faults. He mentions that he often used to give foolish orders when under the influence of drink, for example, his order to burn down the city of Pravarasena which luckily was not carried out by his wise ministers. The second was more

serious. He summoned the king of Gauda (Bengal) to Kashmir and promised him safe conduct, making the image of Vishnu Parihasakesava the surety for his promise. All the same he had the king killed by assassins. It is difficult to find any motive for this foul treachery as to condone it in any way. The sequence of this event is interesting. Hearing of their king's death in Kashmir, a band of infuriated Bengali youth went there to avenge this crime and attacked the temple of Parihasakesava. While they were being cut down by the Kashmir soldiers, they broke open the door of the temple and mistaking another image for that of Parihasakesava, broke it into pieces. Kalhana pays a just tribute to their heroism.

Before his disappearance from the scene, Lalitaditya is supposed to have given the maxims of policy for the guidance of his successors. These are rather curious viewed from modern canons of justice and sound polity, but they illustrate the principles of political wisdom which influenced the Kashmir administration in Kalhana's own time and for long after.

Lalitaditya was followed by a succession of weak kings who were unable to maintain the power and prestige of the dynasty. Short reigns and disputed successions, civil war and fantastic, aimless expeditions, such as those of king Jayapida, debauchery and extravagance, soon reduced the dynasty to a mere shadow. Kuvalyapida, his elder son, born of the queen Kamladevi, was a pious king who, disgusted with petty intrigues of his ministers, gave up the throne and after leading a life of renunciation and piety in India, is said to have obtained supernatural perfection (*siddhi*).

Kuvalyapida's brother, Vajraditya, also named Bappiyaka who was born of Chakramardika, another queen of Lalitaditya, now ascended the throne. A tyrant and a debauchee, he passed his days in the company of a large number of women of his seraglio. The wealth and costly articles with which his father had equipped the temples at Parihasapura, his capital, were taken away and squandered by him. For seven weary years he led his sensuous life when he succumbed to consumption brought on by his excesses.

The sufferings of the people did not end even with the death of Vajraditya. His eldest son and successor, Prithiviyapida, was equally a

tyrant. After four years and one month of his oppressive rule he was dethroned by his rebellious younger brother, Sangramapida whose reign lasted for only seven days, during which there was nothing but strife with his younger brother Jayapida.

Jayapida alias Vinayaditya

There is happily a break in the annals of tyranny. Jayapida, the youngest son of Vajraditya, was a good and just ruler and tried to equal his grandfather, Lalitaditya, in glory. After restoring order and setting up an able administration he marched with 'eighty thousand litters' and a large number of horses on an expedition of conquest.

The long and detailed narrative which Kalhana devotes to his conquering missions, shows him to be almost as great a hero as Lalitaditya. There are a number of coins of the mixed-metal type of the Karkota dynasty bearing his other name of Vinayaditya, but there is no contemporary evidence of his having achieved the vast conquests as detailed by the poet-historian.

What Kalhana relates of the early part of his campaign is that he subjugated all the kingdoms of northern India up to Prayaga (Allahabad), where he gave in charity 10,000 horses to the priests, enjoining upon them to put his seal on the pots of the Ganges water taken by pilgrims from there to their home. This, he vainly believed, would over-awe the rulers of other kingdoms who would automatically become his vassals.

He then left his army in charge of his minister Devasarman and went on an incognito adventure to Bengal where on his way he married the daughter of a prince Jayanta who was struck by his prowess and valour when single-handed he killed a lion. Both he and Jayanta then led an army to the neighboring territories and subjugated them.

On his return Jayapida defeated and dethroned the king of Kanauj, Vajrayudha.⁹ But on reaching Kashmir he found that during the absence of three years from his kingdom, the throne had been usurped by his brother-in-law, Jajja. Jayapida defeated him in a battle fought at Sukseletra where Jajja was killed by a stone flung on to his face with a sling by a Chandala soldier of Jayapida.

Jayapida's building activities deserve a mention. He built a city

named Jayapura towards the Wular lake and marked now by the village of Andarkot. He built a strong fort there and with the marshy ground all around it, this fort was said to be impregnable. In the later history of the Valley, Jayarjura with its fort was the scene of several important battles. Kalhana mentions the founding of two more towns by Jayapida — one near his Jayapura named Dvarvati, and another at Malnanpur, present Malur on the left bank of the Jhelum, 10 kilometers below Srinagar. Kalyandevi and Kamladevi, his two queens, founded the towns of Kalyanapura, present Kalampur, and Kamlapura respectively. One of his ministers, Jayadatta, built a matha at Jayapura.

The king was a great patron of art and letters. He brought learned men from abroad and restored the study of the *Mahabhashya* which had fallen into neglect in Kashmir. He himself studied grammar from a learned man named Kshira. His chief pandit was the great scholar Bhatta Udbhalta, whom he used to give one lakh of *dinaras* daily. He appointed the poet Damodar-gupta, the author of the poem *Kuttanimata* as his chief councillor. Manoratha, Sankhadanta, Chataka and Samdhimat, the famous poets and authors, flourished at his court. Among his ministers was Vamana, one of the two authors of the *Kashikavrtti*, the famous commentary on Panini's grammar. A learned man, Thakkiya by name, though of a low position was elevated and patronised by Jayapida, for his learning. Some of them are known to us from their works and other references.

Of Jayapida's subsequent reign, which according to Kalhana's calculation, would have to be placed in the years 751-782, but which in all probability fell much closer to the end of the eighth century, few authentic details have been given in the *Rajatarangini*. We are told that he led an army against a king of the eastern region, Bhimasen, who imprisoned him, but from whose captivity he managed to escape through a clever stratagem. He is then supposed to have attacked the king of Nepal, Aramudi, but due to a flood in one of the rivers there, he was carried down the current and captured by his adversary who imprisoned him in a strongly built fort. From there he escaped through the loyalty of his minister, Devasarman, who killed himself to enable his master to jump into the river from the fort and cross over to the other bank on his corpse, where his army was waiting to receive him.

Neither Bhimasen nor Aramudi can, however, be traced as historical persons, but taking into account the chaotic conditions prevailing in northern India then, his incursion into these territories is not wholly improbable.

All these expeditions naturally resulted in putting a great strain on the slender resources of Jayapida, more so because they do not seem to have yielded as much loot and tribute as he had expected. The story of the Naga deity of the Wular lake directing him to a copper mine nearby shows the king's anxiety to secure funds for running the administration and paying his army. No wonder that towards the end of his rule, he suddenly turned into a tyrant and began to squeeze his subjects of what they possessed. In this he was assisted by his financial adviser named Sivadasa. For three successive years, he appropriated to himself the whole of the produce including the cultivator's share. Rapine and slaughter were the order of the day. Miserable was the condition of the people, slaughtered and plundered as they were by him who ought to have been their protector. The Brahmins who were his particular victims emigrated in large numbers and those who remained, perished. Some satirical verses which Kalhana quotes as illustrating the changed sentiments of the Brahmins towards the king may well be genuine productions of the period. Ultimately, after numerous Brahmins had sought death by voluntary starvation (*prayopavasa*) Jayapida fell a victim to divine vengeance. Kalhana describes with a good deal of dramatic force the final scene when the Brahmins of Tulamul cursed the king for his arrogance and tyranny and all of a sudden a golden pole of the canopy tumbled down and struck the king who sustained a serious injury which ended his life.

Jayapida's son, Lalitapida born of queen Durga, now ascended the throne. Addicted to conviviality, he squandered the wealth amassed by his father. He, however, made amends for his father's persecution of Brahmins by restoring to them the *agraharas* or land-grants, and endowed new ones at several places in the Valley. His uneventful rule extending over 12 years came to an end with his death. Similar was the rule for seven years of his brother, Sangramapida II, also known by the name of Prithivypida, born of Jayapida's second queen, Kalyandevi.

After Sangramapida II came Cippatajayapida, the minor son of Lalitapida, born of his wife Jayadevi. She was the daughter of a spirit distiller, and being a pretty girl, had been taken as a concubine by Lalitapida. Cippatajayapida was guided in his young age by his maternal uncles, named Utpala, Padma, Kalyana, Mamma and Dharma. His eldest uncle Utpala held five chief offices of the State and his brothers usurped the remaining ones.

What remained of Jayapidas wealth, most of which had already been squandered away by his son Lalitapida, fell into the hands of these brothers. They conspired together when their nephew and lord was gradually emerging from childhood and got him killed, lest he assumed the powers exercised by them.

Having disposed of this puppet king after a nominal rule of 12 years, his maternal uncles grew jealous of one another and hence none of them could secure the throne. Each, however, struggled to put up the person of his choice as the nominal ruler.

Tribhuvanapida was the eldest son of Vajraditya but being a simple man and free from intrigue, his claim to the throne had been bypassed. He had a son named Ajitapida, and Utpala set him up as king. Ajitapida was, however, a convenient tool in the hands of Utpala and his brothers. They provided him with only food and clothing and appropriated to themselves the entire revenue of the kingdom.

The extent of the plunder of public monies by these rapacious men can be estimated by the large number of temples they built and the endowments they created. Utpala built the temple of Utpalasvamin and founded the town of Utpalapura, present Kakapur. Padma created the temple of Padmasvamin and founded the town of Padmapura, present Pampore. Padma's wife built one matha in the capital city and another at Vijayeswara. Kalyana founded the temple of Kalyanasvamin and Mamma of Mammassvamin. Mamma could afford, it is said, to give in charity 85,009 cows each provided with 5,000 dinaras in outfit on the occasion of the consecration of this temple. They virtually ruled the country for thirty-six years and nine months, after which there developed jealousy and open hostility between Mamma and Utpala, resulting after much bloodshed in the discomfiture of Utpala, and the overthrow of his puppet king *Ajitapida*.

Mamma now replaced him by Anangapida, son of Sangramapida II. Anangapida stayed on the throne for only three years, when Sukhavarman, the enterprising son of Utpala, bent upon avenging the death of his father, collected a large number of followers and defeated Mamma's forces. Anangapida was dethroned and replaced by Utpaiapida, son of Ajitapida, and a man of Mamma's choice. Then followed a process of quick accessions and dethronements of a number of puppet kings resulting in utter chaos in the kingdom. The ministers and officials changing in rapid succession, engaged themselves in appropriating State revenues and tyrannising over the unfortunate people. Even the territories adjoining the Valley were lost, the governors and the administrators there declaring themselves independent.

Sukhavarman was meanwhile killed by one of his own relations named Suska. Thereupon Sura, the wise and able prime minister who was dominating the scene supported the direct accession of Sukhavarman's son, Avantivarman, to the throne of Kashmir, thus establishing the rule of the line of kings of the Utpala dynasty.

Avantivarman (855-83 AD)

With the accession of Avantivarman we reach that period of Kashmir history for which Kalhana's work presents us with a truly historical record. The use of contemporary accounts from the commencement of his reign onwards becomes evident, not only from the generally sober and matter-of-fact narrative but also from the use of exact dates.

Avantivarman's reign appears to have brought a period of consolidation and prosperity for the kingdom, which had suffered considerably from internal troubles during the preceding reigns. He did not indulge in vainglorious expeditions outside the Valley, which had sapped the resources of the kingdom in Jayapida's reign. Nor is there mention of his even attempting to regain control over the territories adjacent to his kingdom. It was certainly a wise policy. The peace and prosperity, which it ensured, raised Kashmir during his reign to great heights in the realms of philosophy, art and letters.

So unselfish and affectionate was he that notwithstanding his having a son of his own, he installed his step-brother, Suravarman, to

the position of Yuvraj or heir-apparent. His prime minister, Sura, was a wise administrator who was guided in his duties by a verse in Sanskrit, meaning:

This is the time to do good, while fortune, fickle by nature, is present. How can there be again time for doing good since misfortune is always imminent?

Kalhana's mention of the numerous temples built and towns founded by the king and his court, throws light on the affluent circumstances the people lived in. Sura built a temple of Siva and His consort at Suresvariksetra at Ishabar, on the eastern bank of the Dal Lake and also a matha calling it, after his own name, Suramatha. He founded the town of Surapura (Hurapor near Shopyan) locating therein the watch station which was formerly high up on the Rir Panjal pass. His wife and sons followed his example and built several temples and mathas.

Foremost among the foundations of Avantivarman is the town of Avantipura at the site called. Vivaikasara on the right bank of the Vitasta, 27 kilometers from Srinagar on the Srinagar-Jammu highway. He had built here the shrine of Visnu Avantisvamin before his accession to the throne and, after obtaining the sovereignty; he constructed the temple of Siva Avantesvara. Their ruins, though not equal in size to Lalitaditya's structures, yet rank among the most imposing monuments of ancient Kashmir architecture and sufficiently attest the resources of their builder. He had pedestals with silver conduits made at the shrines of Tripuresvara, Bhutesa and Vijayesa.

Cordial relations subsisted between the king and his prime minister. The king had respect for his minister who was devoted to his master. The minister was always anticipating the king's wishes and without speaking to him, was meeting them quickly and at any cost. Once Avantivarman went to worship at Bhutesa and noticed on the base of the god's images some utpala-shakha (a wild growing vegetable called by the Kashmiris upal-hak) which the priests had placed there as an offering. The king inquired the reason for such a poor offering and the priests told him that a Damara, Dhanava by name, who was a friend of the minister Sura, had taken away the villages belonging to the shrine and hence they could afford to make no offering better than

this to the god. This displeased the king but out of regard for the minister, he did not express his displeasure, and left the worship, feigning indisposition, the minister perceived the true cause of the king's abrupt retirement from the worship and at once summoning Dhanava to his presence, cut off his head. The king's anger was thereupon appeased and when the minister inquired after his health, the king said he was well and resumed his worship.¹⁰

Fully in keeping with the conditions which Kalhana's narrative indicates for the peaceful and just reign of Avantivarman, are the references to the liberal patronage which scholars and poets enjoyed at his court. Among those who are particularly mentioned are Bhatta Kallata, the pupil of Vasugupta, the founder of the Spandasāstra branch of Kashmir Saiva philosophy, Kavi Ratnakara and Anandavardhana. Their extant works occupy a prominent position in the Sanskrit literature of old Kashmir.

Kashmir was liable to floods owing to which it yielded little produce. Lalitaditya had, with great exertions, drained out some water from the Valley after which it produced, to some extent, better crops. After him, however, the drainage operations had been neglected with the result that floods were devastating the country as frequently as ever. The price of grain had consequently gone up, one *Kharwar* (192 lb) of paddy selling at 1,050 *dinaras* in famine-stricken areas. Avantivarman and the people were in veritable despair. The king was very much grieved and thought of several plans for the relief of the people, but what could he do against the great monster — 'Famine'.

At that time appeared a man, named Suyya. His birth is woven in mystery. When a baby, he had been left by some unfortunate woman in a covered earthen pot on the roadside and was picked up by a Chandala woman, named Suyya, while sweeping there. She got him nourished in the house of a Sudra woman, who named him after that of his adopted mother. He grew up into an intelligent youth and having obtained some education, became a private teacher. Possessed as he was of a sharp intellect, there was always a cluster of sensible men around him. Whenever there was a talk of famine, he would say that he knew how to banish this monster if he were provided with the means. King Avantivarman came to know of Suyya's observation and

summoned the man to his presence. Questioned as to what he was saying, Suyya repeated the same words. He would not explain his scheme and so the courtiers declared him to be mad; yet the king wanted to test him and placed his treasures at his disposal. Suyya took many pots full of money in a boat and started towards Madavarajya the southern district of the Valley. He threw a pot of money at a village called Nandaka (Nandi on the Veshau river) which was submerged with flood water and then hastily returned, going to Yakshadara (Dyara-gul meaning the place of money, near Khadanyar below Baramula) and there threw handfuls of money into the river. Who would not doubt the man's unbalanced mind. The king, however, wished to watch the result of his doings. The famine-stricken people who were watching Suyya's operations at once jumped into the river near Dyara-gul and in order to find the precious coins cleared the bed of rocks which had rolled down into the river from the hillside and had choked up the passage. In two or three days the river bed was thus cleared. Suyya then had embankments raised on either side of the river. The river bed was further deepened and cleared of rocks. This accelerated the flow of water which speedily drained out. The submerged land reappeared. The pot full of money, which he had dropped in deep water at Nandaka, came into full view.

Previously the Vitasta and the Sindh met near Trigami (Trigom in the Lar Pargana) turning a large area into a swamp. But Suyya planned their confluence at the present place and regulated the course of the Vitasta in such a manner that it flowed right through the Wular Lake. The course of the tributaries was also regulated in a similar manner. The water was channeled for irrigation purposes and each village was allotted as much water as was necessary for its crops. Suyya had many villages reclaimed from marshy tracts by having circular embankments raised all round them to keep out water, so that they looked like round bowls (*Kunda*) and hence were named Kundala. Some villages, for instance, Utsa-kundal, Mara-Kunda, retain this designation even to this day. As a result of these works hundreds of villages were reclaimed resulting in unprecedented bumper harvests. *One kharwar* of paddy, which used to sell at 200 *dinaras* during the years of plenty, now began to sell at 36 *dinaras*.

Suyya's memory lives in the present Sopore, the town he built on the bank of the Vitasta just at the point where it leaves the basin of the Wular Lake. He also prohibited killing of fish and waterfowl in the Wular Lake. He granted the village Suyyakundala to the Brahmins in honour of his mother Suyya and constructed the *bund* Suyya-setu after her name.

Avantivarman's eventful rule was marked with internal peace and material prosperity to the country. Under him the arts of peace flourished and the rights of humanity were respected. He paid minute attention to everything that tended to promote the well-being of the population. During his reign Kashmir enjoyed a respite from natural as well as man-made calamities. Listening to the end the recital of the Bhagawad-gita, this amiable prince passed away near the shrine of Jyestheswara at Triphar, on the third day of the bright-half of Asada, in the year 3959 Laukika (June, 883 AD).

Samkaravarman (883-902 A.D), his son and successor, had to contend at first with several descendants of Utpala, each of whom aspired to acquire the throne. Ratnavardhana, son of Sura, who was now the most powerful minister, remained loyal to him, but another councillor set up Sukhavarman, son of Survarman, as Yuvraj. Soon the king and the Yuvraj were at war in which the Yuvraj was defeated and imprisoned.

Having freed himself of all pretenders to the throne, Samkaravarman, according to the Chronicler, started on a round of foreign expeditions, "though the country had through the action of time become reduced in population and wealth." The first object of his expedition was the recapture of Darvabhisara, the tract of the lower hills between the Jhelum and Chenab, which had been lost during the unsettled times of the later Karkota kings. Prithvichandra, the ruler of Trigarta, the present Kangra, who came to offer homage is said to have fled in terror on seeing his immense army.

The main force of Samkaravarman's attack appears to have spent itself in a victory over Alakhana, the ruler of Gurjara. This territory, the name of which is preserved in that of the modern town of Gujrat in West Punjab, comprised the upper portion of the land between the Jhelum and the Chenab south of Darvabhisara. Alakhana submitted

and ceded a part of his dominions, called Takkadesha, to Samkaravarman. The king then returned to Kashmir and built a town, which he called Samkarapura (27 kilometres below Srinagar on the Baramula road) after his own name. Two temples built by the king and his queen in the new city, though now in ruins, are still standing. In constructing his town Samkaravarman was base enough to carry away all material that he found of value from Parihaspura, the favourite city of Lalitaditya.

Another expedition which Samkaravarman led to extend his kingdom was against Lalliya whom he desired "to remove from his sovereign position.

Lalliya who was a Brahmin had overthrown the last of the Turki Sahiya kings, the descendants of Kanisla. The Turki Sahiya kings had ruled in Kabul until the capture of that city by the Arab general Yakub-i-Lais in 870. After that date the capital was shifted to Ohind, on the Indus. The dynasty founded by Lalliya, known as that of the Hindu Sahiyas, lasted until 1021 A.D, when it was extirpated by the forces of Mahmud Ghazni. But though Kalhana gives details of the campaign, he is cautious regarding the result, which we may assume to have been without any material success of his arms in this direction.

Samkaravarman was unlike his father a narrow-minded, avaricious and stern king. His rule appears to have been characterised by excessive fiscal exactions and consequent oppression. He resumed villages bestowed by former kings on different temples. As many as 64 temples were plundered by him. He introduced the system of forced labour, chiefly for transport purposes with the greatest rigour. This system of 'Begar' which spelled misery to the villagers, remained a characteristic feature of Kashmir administration till the beginning of the present century. We find the Kayasthas the caste of rapacious officials, favoured by the king, whereas poets like Bhallata (the author of Bhallatasataka and a dictionary called Padmanjari) not cared for. He did not talk in Sanskrit but used vulgar language and ridiculed orthodoxy. He slew Naravahana, the ruler of Daryabhisara, at night, though the latter bore no ill-will towards him — a crime of black and unredeemed treachery.

Kalhana follows up his censures of Samkaravarman's shortsighted policy by an ironical reference to the fate which overtook his only

foundation. Samkarapura, the town that was to have borne his name, never rose to significance. His name was considered a word of ill-omen and, therefore, Samkarapura was called only Pattan (city). Providence did not leave him without hitting him hard by way of punishment for he lost several sons who all met with sudden death.

Samkaravarman's life and reign also found a violent end. Sukharaja who was the king's evil minister had appointed his nephew to the high office of the 'Lord of Marches'. He was killed in a frontier affray at Viranaka a village in the Jhelum valley below Baramula. The king to avenge his death himself marched at the head of his troops and after punishing the tribes inhabiting the narrow valley near Viranaka, proceeded towards the Indus. The expedition does not seem to have been a success and on his way back he was attacked and killed in Urusha (Hazara) on the seventh of the dark fortnight of Phalguna, 3977 Laukika (902 A.D). To avoid the annihilation of the army at the hands of the tribesmen of the Jhelum valley, Sukharaja and other ministers cleverly concealed his death for six days until the army was conducted safely across the Kashmir boundary, four marches below Baramula, where the funeral was performed. This distinct indication of the frontier-line shows how little the political authority of Kashmir had advanced westwards by Samkaravarman's conquering expeditions.

Gopalavarman (902-904 A.D), his son, still a child, ascended the throne under the guardianship of his mother, Sugandha. The minister Prabhakardeva, who was the widow-queen's paramour, exercised the real powers of the king, Kalhana records how on a victorious expedition which he had led against the seat of the Sahiya power at Udbhandapura (modern Und), he "bestowed the kingdom of the rebellious Sahi upon Toramana, Lalliya's son, and gave him the new name of Kamaluka" reference to whom is made in Alberuni's list of the rulers of this dynasty.

After a nominal rule of two years, Gopalavarman was destroyed by the ambitious and unscrupulous minister through magic and in his place Samkuta a suppositions son of Samkaravarman was installed as king. He, however, died after only ten days' rule and then Sugandha (904-906 A.D) herself assumed the royal power. She founded the town of Gopalapura (Guripur, a village on the left bank of the Jhelum

below Avantipura) Gopalamatha, the temple of Gopalakeshva, and another town, Sugandhapura.

The only hope of the Utpala dynasty continuing to rule the kingdom was lost when Jayalakshmi a wife of Gopalavarman, who was enceinte, gave birth to a dead child. Sugandha then wished the kingdom to go to one of her relations. She called her ministers together and asked them to select a fit successor to her. She wanted to have Nirjitavarman, one of her relatives, nicknamed Pangu (lame), to be nominated but the ministers did not favour his selection. Meanwhile the Tantrins, a military caste of uncertain origin, who had assumed the position of true Praetorians raised Partha, son of Nirjitavarman, to the throne, though he was yet a boy of ten years and removed Sugandha who was disliked for there low morals, after a rule of two years.

Sugandha who had run away after her deposition to Huskapura was secretly planning to stage a come back. In 914 AD she collected enough troops of Ekangas, another body of soldiery, the rivals of Tantrins, and marched against Partha. But with the aid of Tantrins, he easily defeated her and taking her prisoner put her to death.

But the country was no better under the new rule. During the 15 years of Partha's nominal reign, the country was a prey to the oppression of Tantrins. Nirjitavarman, who had been rejected as unfit for the throne by the ministers for his low moral character, became the child-king's guardian. He could maintain himself only by paying heavy bribes to the Tantrins. In the exactions by which they oppressed the land, the soldiers were helped by unscrupulous ministers, among whom the brothers Samkaravardhana and Sambuwardhana rose to prominence. Their father Meruwardhana built the famous temple called Meruwardhanaswamin, at Puranadisthana (Pandrenthan) which is still extant, standing in the water of a shallow tank.

In 917-18 A.D a famine occurred owing to the autumn rice crop having been destroyed by floods and the wrath of Nature was added to the oppressions of man. A Kharwar of paddy sold at 1,000 *dinaras*. People perished of starvation by thousands. The greedy ministers took advantage of this catastrophe also; they made fortunes by selling stores of grain at exorbitant prices.

Partha and Nirjitavarman were not on good terms. Sometimes the

son gained the upper hand and ousted his father and sometimes the father prevailed and was restored to power. In this way the quarrel went on. In 921 AD, Nirjitavarman overthrew his son by the help of Tantrins and declared himself king. His reign lasted two years and one month and before his death he placed his child-son Chakravarman (923-33 AD) on the throne.

This child-king reigned for ten years under the guardianship of his mother and grandmother, until in 933 AD the Tantrins deposed him and raised Suravarman (933-34), the son of Nirjitavarman from another wife, to the throne. This king was gifted with good qualities but the mercenary Tantrins did not like him because he would not give them rich gifts which they expected for their having given him the kingdom. So after a year they deposed him also and elevated Partha again for a year to the throne when Chakravarman again came on the scene and promised them bigger rewards.

On his restoration, however, Chakravarman found that he had no money in the treasury to pay to the Tantrin soldiers and, therefore, fled away towards the northern districts, having occupied the throne for only a year.

Samkaravardhana the wicked minister accompanied his master to voluntary exile but secretly wished to avail of this opportunity to seize the throne. He sent his brother Sambhuvardhana to negotiate with the Tantrins. Sambhuvardhana (935-36) played false with his elder brother and secured the throne for himself offering still greater bribes to the Tantrins.

After he had lost his kingdom, Chakravarman sought and received in 936 A.D the aid of a powerful Damara, named Samgrama. The Damara collected a large and ferocious army and Chakravarman marched at its head to seize the capital. The Tantrin troops, led by Samkaravardhana who had by now made up with his brother, met him at Pampore and a bloody battle ensued and was fought with an obstinacy suitable to the prize for which the parties contended. The splendid heroism exhibited by Chakravarman who himself killed Samkaravardhana won admiration from all. The Tantrins lost heavily and were completely routed. Chakravarman made then a triumphal entry into the capital and avenged himself by the execution of Sambhuvardhana who had been captured.

Though the power of the Tantrins seemed to have been crushed completely by Chakravarman's victory he profited by it but little. He abandoned himself to a life of pleasure. A Domba musician named Ranga who had come from a distant place outside Kashmir with his two daughters, Hamsi and Nagalata, was received by the king at his court to entertain him. These two girls were pretty and the king falling in love with them took them into his seraglio, paying no regard to the fact that they belonged to a low caste. Hamsi became the chief queen. The Dombas had great influence at the court, but the Damaras who had helped him in recovering his kingdom were despised and even killed by him. Things reached the culmination point in 937 A.D when the Damaras plotted to kill this proud king. One night (eighth of the bright fortnight of Jestha, 937 A.D) some Damaras, finding him unarmed treacherously murdered him in the arms of his Domba queen.

Unmattavanti (937-939A.D) whom the ministers now installed as king proved to be a still more immoral person. A son of Partha, he justified his appellation of 'mad king' by his excesses in display and debauch. He was always surrounded by people who could amuse him by their vulgarity. Parvagupta, an ambitious minister, who was scheming to capture the throne for himself, induced the depraved king to destroy his own relatives. The old Partha, the king's father, was still living with his family at Jayendravihara at Srinagar, where the charity of the Buddhist monks supported him in his helpless poverty. Unmattavanti first had Partha's young sons, his own half-brothers, carried away from there to prison, where he let them die of hunger. Subsequently Partha himself was attacked at night in the vihara and cruelly murdered. The parricide king did not enjoy long the security he had purchased by the extermination of his near relatives. He fell a victim to consumption and died in July 939 after placing on the throne a young child, Suravarman by name, whom his concubines had picked up from some-where and had falsely declared to be the king's son.

This child-king was on the throne for only a few days. Kamalavardhana, the commander-in-chief, who desired to seize the throne and who was marching upon the city from the district of Maraj easily defeated the Tantrins and royal troops and entered the palace unopposed. It was now easy for the victorious commander-in-

chief to seat himself on the vacant throne, but to give a semblance of legality to it, he sought his election as king from an assembly of Brahmins.

The assembled wiseacres, whom Kalhana describes with much humour, proved refractory and debated for several days, while Purohita corporations collected enmasse and started a solemn fast to enforce a decision. Ultimately the choice of the assembly fell on the Brahmin, Yasaskara, the son of Gopalavarman's treasurer Prabhakardeva, who had left Kashmir in poverty and had just then returned to his birthplace with a reputation for learning and eloquence.

Yasaskara (939-48 A.D) and His Successors—

The choice of the electors was fully justified by the benevolent rule of Yasaskara. The kingdom obtained a respite from civil war and internal troubles, which had reduced the people to the lowest depth of misery. Kalhana praises the manifold virtues of this king and the beneficent nature of his rule. The unruly officials who plundered the royal treasury were brought under control, and the land became so free from robbery that at night the shops were left open and the roads were secure for travellers. Trade and agriculture flourished, and the moral tone of the people improved.

Kalhana gives a very favourable account of the wisdom of Yasaskara's administration of justice and quotes two illustrations intended to show his skill in the interpretation of legal contracts. Once a man who was driven to committing suicide by starvation by the unscrupulous conduct of a merchant represented to the king: *"I was once a wealthy man, but falling on bad days I became poor and contracted debts. The creditors who were demanding money were pestering me. The only way, I thought, of clearing my debts was to sell off my property and go abroad in search of employment. So I sold my house to a merchant. There was a well attached to this house which yielded rent from vegetable growers and this I retained for the sustenance of my wife while I was away. Returning with a small fortune, I found on arrival my wife eking out her existence by working as a maid in a household. Knowing well that I had left for her sufficient means of maintenance, her pitiable plight surprised me. She, however, told me that the merchant who had purchased my house had*

driven her away from the well, saying that the house had been sold by me together with the well. I had recourse to law courts but they dismissed my claim. I am, therefore, going to put an end to my life."

The king summoned the judges and the merchant to his presence and inquired into the matter. They showed him the sale deed in which it was clearly written that the man had sold his house together with the well. But the king had doubts about it. He changed the subject of his talk, as though he had been fully satisfied on seeing the deed, and diverted his councillor's attention by discussion of some other topic. He showed an interest in the jewels that they wore and took out also from the merchant's finger his ring for a closet examination. While admiring it he retired to another apartment telling them all to wait till he came back. From there he secretly sent a messenger with the ring to the merchant's house instructing him to show it to his accountant as a token and to get from him the daily account book of the year in which the deed had been executed for being produced before the court where it had been immediately demanded. When the book was brought, the king examined the entries under the date on which the deed had been executed and found among other items of expenditure an entry of 1,000 dinaras paid to the official Registrar. A small sum was payable as fee and the payment of this high sum plainly showed that the Registrar had been bribed to interpolate *sa* (together) in place of *ra* (without) in the deed. Then he had not only the well but also the whole house restored to the plaintiff and the merchant was suitably punished.

On another occasion a distressed man represented that he had 100 gold coins tied in his clothes, which accidentally fell into a well. A man offered to get the coins out and he promised that if he succeeded in recovering the coins, he might return him any amount he liked. "But he gave me," he said, "*only two coins and openly retained for himself ninety-eight. When I remonstrated against this and appealed to the people who were assembled there, I was frowned out being told that in your reign all transactions are carried out in strict pursuance of the letter of the agreement.*"

The king consoled him and summoning the man who had retained the lion's share of the coins, recorded his statement. The man repeated precisely what the complainant had said earlier, and asserted that he

had done it in accordance with the man's own stipulation. The king adjudged 98 coins to be returned to the complainant and only two to be retained by the man who had brought them out of the well. "The man", declared the king, *"had stipulated that whatever you liked may be given to him and since you liked ninety-eight coins which you wanted to keep, they belong to him, and the two which you did not like and handed over to him, actually are your share of the amount."*

King Yasaskara built a *matha* for the residence of students from other parts of India and granted 55 land-grants to deserving Brahmins.

Yasaskara's own character was not, however, without a blemish. He raised to the position of governor a man whose intrigues with the queens he connived at. He had a woman, named Lallain his seraglio who wielded great influence on him, though he knew that she was having shameful relations with a low class man. Yasaskara was not a prudent king even. He displayed great joy at the death of his eldest brother, which naturally led people to suspect that he had administered poison to him.

Yasaskara who was attacked by a fatal illness, after having reigned for nine years got his cousin, Varnata, installed as king, over the claims of his own son, Samgramadeva, whom he suspected of having been begotten in adultery.

Varnata (948 A.D) was not given to rule for more than a day and rightly so. He, after sitting on the throne, was ungrateful enough not to have visited Yasaskara to inquire about his condition. The latter getting angry and instigated by his scheming minister, Parvagupta, cancelled this succession and had his child-son Samgramadeva (948-949) installed as king. Yasaskara repaired to his *matha* to die there. His end was most miserable; even by his own family forsaken him. He had 2,500 gold pieces in his clothes, which his vulture-like ministers snatched away from his helpless hands and divided among themselves under his very eyes while he lay rolling in agony on his deathbed.

The minister Parvagupta who had his eye fixed on the crown since the days of unmattavani and whose power became supreme after Yasaskara's death, first put Samgramadeva's grandmother as the child-king's guardian and himself, together with other ministers, exercised all the power. Not satisfied with this he collected his troops and laid

siege to the palace, intending to sweep away the nominal ruler, Samgramadeva, also. Samgramadeva had a faithful minister, Ramavardhana, who put up a fight but Parvagupta slew him together with his son. This infernal wicked minister then entered the palace and killed Samgramadeva most cruelly, dragging him down from the throne and throwing him into the Jhelum with a stone tied to his neck.

Parvagupta (949-50 A.D) who was descended from a humble family of clerks did not enjoy long the possession of the crown, which he had obtained with so much treachery. During the short rule, however, he oppressed the people and exacted money from them. To perpetuate his memory he founded with his ill-gotten wealth the shrine of Siva, called Parvaguptesvara, at the Skandabhavanvihara, on the right bank of the Jhelum near the sixth bridge in Srinagar.

This wicked king proposed to a widow of Yasaskara, named Gauri, a lady of superb beauty. But she was a pure-hearted woman and this insult was unbearable to her. She, however, desired to see the temple of Yasaskarsvamin, which her husband had left unfinished, completed, and so she sent him word that she would marry him provided he first completed this temple. Parvagupta was delighted to receive this conditional consent and fired with lustful desire he got the temple completed with the greatest possible, speed. He now expected to win his sweetheart but lo! This virtuous lady suddenly kindled a fire and, in order to save her honour, jumped into it and sacrificed her life.

The circumstances of the king's private life including this tragic and horror-inspiring incident made him the object of intense odium and scorn, while his public acts and infidelity to his master, Samgramadeva, left an indelible stigma on his reputation.

Within a year and a half of his accession he died of dropsy leaving the throne to his son and successor, Kshemagupta (950-958 A.D). The new king was a youth grossly sensual and addicted to drinking, gambling and other vices. A court of depraved parasites encouraged him in his excesses. The famous Jayendravihara which had been built by Jayendra, the maternal uncle of king Pravarasena II, was burned down by the king's soldiers because a powerful Damara had taken refuge there and the priests would not give him into their hands. For

the benefit of his own temple named Kshemagauresa, he plundered this vihara using the molten brass of the Buddha image in it to cast the image for his own temple. This perhaps is the only signal act of his reign.

Didida The Dominating Queen

Insignificant as Kshemagupta was as a ruler, he was yet destined to influence materially the history of Kashmir during the next centuries by his marriage with Didida, the daughter of Simharaja, chief of Lohara. This territory, which has left its name to the present valley of Lohrin, comprised the mountain districts immediately adjoining Kashmir Valley on the south-west and now included in the Poonch district. Kshemagupta's union with Didida brought Kashmir under the rule of the Lohara family, which continued to hold Kashmir as well as its own original home down to the times of Kalhana and later.

The king was so enamored of his wife that people nick-named him 'Diddakshema'. We have documentary evidence of this exceptional position in the legend of Kshemagupta's coins where the *Di* prefixed to the king's name is undoubtedly intended as an abbreviation of *Didida*. He also married the daughter of Phalguna, his chief minister, named Chandralekha. The maternal grandfather of queen Didida named Bhima Sahi, built during Kshemagupta's lifetime the temple of Bhimakesava at Bumzu near Martand, and endowed it with rich grants of land.

Kshemagupta who was passionately fond of jackal-hunts contracted a violent fever during one of these. He was removed to his matha at Baramula and there he died on the ninth day of the bright fortnight of Pausa (December) in the year Laukika 4034 (958 A.D.).

Kshemagupta's child-son, Abhimanyu (958-972), was now installed as king, his mother Didida becoming the regent and exercising all royal power herself. Cruel, suspicious, unscrupulous, and licentious in the extreme, Didida combined in her character an inordinate lust for power with statesman-like sagacity, political wisdom, and administrative ability.

The early years of the queen's regency were full of troubles and risks. Didida had been in enmity with the Prime Minister, Phalguna,

owing to the jealousy she had with her rival, his daughter. The old commander-in-chief, Rakka, now poisoned her mind against him saying that he was preparing to usurp the throne. Phalguna came to know of this and, to avoid a mishap to himself, left for Poonch where he intended to stay until the return of his son, Kardamaraja, who had gone to deposit the ashes of Kshemagupta into the Ganges. A large force accompanied him and while he was on his way, Didda sent her orderlies after him. The general returned with his troops to Baramula. Didda and her advisers on hearing of his return were afraid lest he raise the banner of revolt, but Phalguna left his sword at the feet of the image of god Varaha at Baramula and so dispelled all suspicion of treason from the mind of Didda. Phalguna then proceeded to Poonch to the great joy of other ministers who were jealous of his power, and Didda, who was afraid of his influence and power, now began to breathe freely.

But Didda had yet to encounter real enemies. Parvagupta's grandsons, Mahiman and Patala, born of his two daughters, were eager to seize the throne. The queen had ordered to deport them, but they collected a force and arrayed themselves for a battle at Pampore. At this critical moment the minister Naravahana remained faithful to the queen and stood by her. The queen managed to bribe several of the pretenders, supporters and promised high posts to many, and thus the revolt fizzled out.

Yasodhara, who was one of these, and to whom the queen had been obliged to give the chief command of her forces, had to face the same fate as befell Phalguna. Once he led an expedition against the Sahi ruler, Thakkana, and won a victory. This caused jealousy among other officials and they intrigued to poison the mind of the queen against him, telling her that he would now seize her throne. When the commander-in-chief expecting royal favours for the victory he had gained, returned, the queen to his great surprise, sent orderlies to deport him. This insult created another rebellion. The troops got disaffected and the situation became critical for the queen, but at this crisis also the faithful minister, Naravahana, stood by her side. With his help and advice the queen gathered her troops and a skirmish took place in which the rebels were defeated. Then the infuriated queen took a terrible vengeance by mercilessly executing all captured rebels.

and exterminating their families.

On Naravahana she conferred honours and continued to rule with his advice. But the royal favours, as in the case of others before him, were a prelude to his destruction. Other officials got envious of Naravahana and the intrigues began to be directed against him. The fickle-minded queen was led astray by them and her ears were poisoned against Naravahana. When one day the minister invited her to a feast she refused to accept the invitation, and this and other insults drove the loyal minister to suicide.

Didda now wanted a strong minister to assist her in carrying on the government and she recalled Phalguna from Poonch. This minister once hated and dreaded, became the favourite and a paramour of this dissolute old woman.

Abhimanyu, himself bearing an irreproachable character, became miserable and sick to see the evil conduct of his mother. He contracted consumption and died in 972 A.D. Over and above the repressions suffered by the people as a result of the misrule of his mother, a devastating fire destroyed a large part of Srinagar during his reign.

Abhimanyu was succeeded by his son, Nandigupta (972-73). The grief of her lost son softened for some time the heart of Didda and she, in expiation of her immoral acts, founded several temples and villages in different parts of the kingdom, amongst which were Diddamatha, now known by the name of Diddamar, a *mohalla* in Srinagar on the right bank of the river near the seventh bridge.

But this conduct of hers lasted for a year only. She then forgot her grief and her lust for pleasure and power returned. She destroyed Nandigupta by witchcraft as also her another grandson, Tribhuvana (973-75) who had ascended the throne after his brother's death.

Didda's third and last grandson, Bhimagupta (975-981) who was yet a child, was installed as king under her guardianship. Some time after, the minister Phalguna died. The wicked queen was, out of respect for him, so far concealing her shameless acts, but as soon as he died she began to commit excesses with impunity. She fell in love with a buffalo herdsman, Tunga by name, who had come to Kashmir from Poonch and who had obtained service as a letter-carrier. Bhuyya, a pious man who after Abhimanyu's death had induced the queen to

desist from sinful deeds, disliked the despicable conduct of hers and she, unable to get rid of him by honourable means, had recourse to the method she knew well enough and succeeded before long in disposing him of by poison.

After four or five years Bhimagupta was a little more developed in intellect and realised that his grandmother's way of living was bad. The diabolical and perverse minded Didda, thereupon, getting alarmed imprisoned him and put him to death by torture.

Didda (981-1003 A.D) now ascended the throne herself. She elevated her paramour, Tunga, to the post of chief minister and his five brothers to other important offices of State. The discontented ministers and officials who were ousted entered into league to raise a rebellion. They brought vigraharaja, a relative of Didda, into the conspiracy and spread disaffection among the Brahmins inducing them to hold solemn fasts (*prayopavasa*) against the queen and Tunga. But Tunga's valour and Didda's cunning diplomacy and bribes defeated these attempts. During her reign of 25 years, there were political intrigues, murders, banishments and denunciations, and *infinitem*.

The chief of Rajauri, Prithvipala, showed signs of unrest and Tunga led an expedition against him. Prithvipala attacked the Kashmir troops in a defile and killed two of the ministers. Then Tunga together with his brothers entered Rajauri by another route and set fire to the town. By this successful attack, Prithvipala was forced to surrender and pay tribute. Tunga, victorious and triumphant, returned to Srinagar and in recognition of the victory was made also commander-in-chief of Didda's army.

The statesman-like instinct and political ability which must be ascribed to Didda in spite of all the defects of her character are attested by the fact that she remained to the last in possession of the Kashmir throne, and was able to bequeath it to her family in undisputed succession. In order to assure the latter she appointed Samgramaraja, the son of her brother, Udayraja, the ruler of Lohara, as heir-apparent choosing him amongst a large number of her other nephews, all young boys. She placed a heap of apples before them and told them that she would see how many could each pick up. There was a scramble among these youngsters. But she noticed that Samgramaraja had picked up

not only the largest number, but was quite unhurt. She asked him how he had succeeded in getting so many and he replied that while remaining aloof from the scramble he had induced other boys to do so and in the fighting that ensued he had picked up the fruits with ease. On hearing this, that adept in statecraft, Didda considered him the wisest and fittest of them all for the throne of Kashmir.

And thus when the aged queen died in 1003 A.D, after half a century of ruthless government, first as queen consort, then as regent and ultimately as sovereign, the crown passed quietly and without a contest or convulsion to the new dynasty, the House of Lohara.

NOTES

1. H. Goetz, 'Sun Temple of Martand', Art and Letters, Vol. xxvii, No. 1. For a detailed analysis of the events see his paper on the Conquest of Western India by Lalitaditya-Muktapada of Kashmir in the Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. 27, 1951.
2. R.C. Majumadar, *Ancient India*, p. 383.
3. Ibid., p. 381.
4. *Rajatarangini*, iv 168.
5. Stein, trans. Of *Rajatarangini*, II, p. 609.
6. Younghusband, *Kashmir* p. 201.
7. H. Goetz, op. cit. p. 8.
8. Stein trans of *Rajatarangini*, Vo., II, p. 300.
9. Smith, *Early History of India*, p. 307.
10. Here we have the first glimpse of a Damara lord who had grown rich and haughty after laying his hands on temple property. The disturbed conditions prevailing during the rule of the later Karkotas, seem to have given rise to a class of rich landlords who later on played an important and dominant role in Kashmir politics.

CHAPTER: 4

*Social Economic and
Cultural Development*

The extent of the area of Kashmir that will be covered by this survey, will naturally be confined to the Valley proper. For, though at times the kingdom extended to as far as Kanauj in the south and Tibet in the north, our information is neither detailed nor authentic about these places. There was, of course, a close resemblance to political institutions, social classes, military organisation and trade and commerce prevailing in the rest of India, of which Kashmir from ancient times was a part; yet since the information vouchsafed us by Kalhana and other authors is limited to the Valley proper we have perforce to content ourselves with its narrow geographical limits. It will therefore be useful to give a brief notice of the territories which lay beyond the confines of the Valley and which formed its neighbors during the Hindu times.

Beginning in the south-east we have the valley of Kashtvatta, the present Kishtwar, on the upper Chenab. It is mentioned by Kalhana as a separate hill state in the times of Kalasa.¹ Its rajas who were Hindu till Aurangzeb's time, practically retained their independence up to the beginning of the 19th century. The hill district of Bhadrawah lower down on the Chena' had also its rajas who were till recent times tributary to Chamba.

The rajas of Chamba, ancient Champa, figure often in the Kashmir

Chronicles. Their territory has since early times comprised the valleys of the sources of the Ravi between Kangra, the ancient Trigarta, and Kashtvata. The ancient Rajput family which ruled this hill state often intermarried with the Lohara dynasty which reigned in Kashmir.² To the west of Chamba lay the old chiefship of Vallapura, modern Bilawar. Its rulers are repeatedly referred to in Kalhana's narrative.

They retained their independence as petty hill chiefs till the rise of Gulab Singh in the 19th century.

Of the political organisation of the territory between Vallapura in the south-east and Rajauri in the north-west, there is no distinct information. The inhabitants of this region are the Dogras, a name traditionally derived from Dvigarta.

Immediately at the foot of the Banihal pass is the territory known in ancient times as Visalata. Temporarily these hill states acknowledged the suzerainty of Kashmir, but during the greater part of the period they appear to have held their own and rather to have obtained subsidies from the Kashmir rulers.³

Some of these petty hill states were perhaps included in the territories known as Darvabhisara, comprising the whole tract of the lower and middle hills between the Jhelum and the Chenab. The combined names of the Darvas and Abhisaras are found already in the ethnographical lists of the Mahabharata and Brihatsamhita. A chief of this region figures under the ethnic name of Abhisares in the accounts of Alexander's Indian campaign.

The most important of the hill states in this region is Rajapuri, modern Rajauri. Owing to its position on the direct route to the Punjab, Rajauri was necessarily often brought into political relations with Kashmir. Heun Tsiang mentions this hill state to be a part of the territories of the Kashmir king in his time. From the tenth century onwards we find the rajas of this principality practically independent rulers, though we learn of numerous expeditions undertaken to this state by the later Kashmir kings. The ruling family belonged to the Khasha tribe.⁴

On the north-west, Rajuri was adjoined by the territory of Lohara, the chief valley of which is now known as Lohrin. Lohara became important for Kashmir from the end of the tenth century onwards

when a branch of its ruling family obtained the Kashmir throne. Subsequently this branch succeeded to Lohara which was united with Kashmir under the same ruler. The chiefs of this family are mentioned to have belonged to the Khasha tribe. As the ancestral home of the rulers, Lohara obtained an important position during the rule of later kings of Kashmir. Lohara seems to have included the principality of Poonch, ancient Paranotsa, which in Heun Tsiang's time formed a part of the kingdom of Kashmir. Being on the direct route to the Western Punjab, Poonch is often mentioned in the Chronicles. It is possible that the hill state of Kalinjara, which is repeatedly mentioned by Kalhana, lay in this direction.

To the north-west of Poonch is the valley of the Vitasta. From ancient times it was held by the Kashmir kings as an outlying frontier district as far down as Bolyasaka, present Buliasa. Further down the valley up to Muzaffarabad the territory was held by fierce Khakha and Bomba tribes, who were subjugated by Gulab Singh only in the last century. This tract was known in ancient times as Dvarvati from which its modern designation of Dwarbidi has been derived.

Further to the west beyond Muzaffarabad lay the ancient kingdom of Urusa, now known as the district of Hazara. Its ruler figures as Arsakes in the accounts of Alexander's campaign. Heun Tsiang while coming to the Valley from the district found it a tributary of Kashmir. We find Urusa often mentioned in the Rajatarangini. The account of Samkaravarman's ill-fated expedition to Urusa furnishes us a clue as to the location of its capital then, which may have been near about the town of Abbotabad.⁵

The tract now known as Karnah in the Kishenganga valley bore the old name of Karnaha and was a small chief ship, tributary to Kashmir. Drava, the tract above the junction of the Kishenganga river with the Karanah stream, included the famous shrine of Sarada, so often mentioned in the Chronicles and was a feudal stronghold in the later history of this period. The upper Indus valley to which a route lay from Sarada seems to have been, however, outside the sphere of Kashmir political influence, hence we have no mention of any ancient name of the tract in the Chronicles.

Immediately above Sarada lies the territory known as Dardistan,

or Dardadesa of the *Rajatarangini*. Its rulers who bore Hindu names more than once attempted invasions of the Valley. Daratpuri, the town of the Darads, may have occupied the position of modern Gurez. The Malechha chiefs who on two occasions figure as the Dard Rajas' allies in Kalhana's work, were perhaps rulers of other Dard tribes further towards the Indus who had earlier been converted to Islam.⁶

Crossing over from the headwaters of the Kishenganga river to those of the Dras river, we reach the Ladakh district, the land of the Bhauttas of the *Rajatarangini*. There are, however, very few references to these territories to enable us to form an idea of their political organisation and though the Valley suffered a lot from invasions from this side in the concluding years of the Hindu rule, even Jonaraja and Srivara, the later Chroniclers do not supply us with any information. Srivara, however, seems to have known the "little and the Great Bhautta-Land", a reference to Baltistan and Ladakh.⁷

The eastern frontier of the Valley is formed by a mountain range which runs from the Zojila almost due south to Kishtwar. Along this range on the east lies a long narrow valley known in Kashmiri as Mariv-Wadwan. Its high elevation and rigorous climate are responsible for its scanty population, which is entirely Kashmiri. We have no mention of this tract in the *Rajatarangini* and it is doubtful if this belonged to the Kashmir kingdom under the Hindu rulers. Beyond it to the east stretches the belt of high mountains and glaciers, and to its south we reach once more the tract of Kishtwar.

Towns and Cities

As regards the internal condition of the Valley it was materially different from what it is today. Though the location of cities, towns and villages has changed but little, yet their importance as centres of trade or the seat of government varied from time to time. At present several of these once famous places are no more than insignificant villages.

According to Greek and Roman historians Kaspatyros was a city of Gandharians. Most probably it refers to the capital of Kashmir, which from ancient times had been known to foreigners by the same name as the kingdom. According to Kalhana, Asoka built the city of

Srinagar which up to the sixth century AD was the capital of the Valley.⁸ Pravarasena II built his city Pravarasenagar at the site occupied by the present Srinagar and moved the royal headquarters to it. Heun Tsiang definitely mentions it as the 'new city' in contradistinction to the 'old capital', Puranadhisthana, modern Pandrenthan.

The history of Srinagar is as interesting as that of the Valley. It was destroyed by fire several times and rebuilt. The houses were mainly constructed of timber then as now. Kalhana mentions in several places the splendour of its markets, gardens and lofty houses. There were no permanent bridges during the Hindu rule, but the river was spanned by a number of boat bridges. The *Rajdhani* or palace of the Hindu rulers was most probably located just below the second bridge (Habba Kadal) on the left bank of the river. With its landmarks of the Hari Parbat and Sankaracharya hills, the city was dotted with richly endowed stone temples, traces of which can still be found in sculptured blocks, pillars and images in the walls and embankments.⁹ Kalhana also mentions the *ghats* and the bathing houses of the city. Bilhana found the city equally charming and surpassing in beauty all other cities. "For its coolness in summer and for the beauty of its grooves", says he, "even those who have reached the garden of the celestials could not forget it."¹⁰

We have a mention of the foundation of three important cities by the Kusan rulers, Kaniska, Juska and Huviska. The memory of these cities still lives in their names. Kaniskapura, Huviskapura and Juskapura, are identified with the villages of Kanespura situated between the Vitasta and the Baramula-Srinagar highway; Uskur, 3.2 kilometres to the south-east of Srinagar.¹¹ Of these three cities Huviskapura has been often mentioned in the Chronicle and seems to have retained its importance for a long time as the headquarters of the Buddhist monks and also as the first town of note in the Valley on its entrance from the Jhelum valley route. Heun Tsiang stopped here after passing the ancient gate of Baramula. It is mentioned by Alberuni who gives its exact location.¹² Ruins of an ancient *vihara* and a *stupa* have been found near the village as also a large number of terracotta figures.

We have a mention of a town founded by Abhimanyu which is supposed to have been located at Bemyun near Srinagar. King Nara's

town, Kimanarapura,¹³ mentioned by Kalhana in connection with the legend of Susravasa Naga, and situated near the modern town of Bijbihari, was supposed to have been a flourishing city with its markets full of fruits and vegetables and its ghats buzzing with loading and unloading operations of merchandise. It had lofty houses, parks and cool springs and 'surpassed even Kubera's town by the riches amassed there.' But the wicked deeds of its founder, King Nara, brought on it the wrath of the Nagas and it was destroyed by them by lightening and fire.

Near about Nara's city we have the town of Vijayeswara built round the famous shrine of Siva Vijayesa by King Vijaya.¹⁴ The city figures prominently in the Chronicles as the refuge of King Ananta and also as the headquarters of the powerful Damaras of the southern district of the Valley. The temple which was surrounded by a high wall was set on fire by Ananta's son, Kalasa, and later by Bhiksacara. It was here that several decisive battles were fought during the civil war between the later Lohara kings and the several pretenders to the throne. About the middle of the seventh century AD, Pratapaditya II, founded the town called Pratapapura which has been identified with the present Tapar. Excavations conducted there recently have unearthed the foundations of an old stone temple, but no indication is found of the poetic assertion of Kalhana of its rivalling the city of Indra in splendour.

Lalitaditya's capital city of Parihaspura¹⁵ which he took pains to build on a lavish scale, is now nothing but a desolate plain with the scattered ruins lying about in confusion. As already mentioned, the city was systematically destroyed by successive kings who robbed it of building materials and objects of art. Parihaspura lost its importance by these vandalistic acts and also as a result of the flood protection measures taken by Suyya, the engineer of Avantivarman, which changed the course of the Vitasta that had been flowing by it till then.

Lalitaditya's grandson, Jayapida, built a city called Jayapura which has been identified with the present village of Andarkot. Situated on an island rising from the Sumbal lake, the fortified city was the scene of the drama which saw the end of Hindu rule in Kashmir in the 14th century. But except a few hamlets there is no trace to be found of this 'splendid town'.

The present town of Pampore (ancient Padmapura) famous for its saffron cultivation, was founded in the first quarter of the ninth century by Padma, the maternal uncle of Chippatajayapida. Due to its central position in the Valley, the town grew in importance and thus finds a frequent mention in the *Rajataragini*.

The city of Avantivarman, marked by the modern town of Avantipura, stood on a high and dry spur of the Wastarwan hills, on the right bank of the Vitasta.¹⁶ Owing to its central and strategic location in the Valley, the town has been of considerable importance since the date of its foundation, and hence is often mentioned in the *Samayamatrika* of Kshemendra and in the Chronicles of Kalhana, Jonaraja and Srivara. The large number of ruins extending up to the hills to the east of the present Avantipura town, show that in former times it used to cover a large area. Among the ruins can be recognised the remains of the two old temples of Siva Avantesvra and Visnu Avantisvamin.

The important town of Surapura, present Hurapur, the first stage from the Valley on the old Mughal Road over the Pir Panjal Pass, was founded by Sura, Avantivarman's able minister.¹⁷ From Kalhana's mention of the transfer of the watch-station and fort on the Pass to the new town and from his other statements, it is evident that Surapura was a centre of trade in early days and commanded a strategic importance.

Another important town founded during Avantivarman's reign was that of Suyyapura by Suyya.¹⁸ Identified with the present Sopore, the town situated on the Vitasta immediately where she leaves the Wular Lake, Suyyapura became a centre of trade in the north of the Valley.

Avantivarman's son, Samkaravarman, founded the city of Samkarapura, which is identified with Pattan, 28 kilometres below Srinagar on the Baramula road.¹⁹ To build the city, Samkaravarman used the material of Parihaspura, Lalitaditya's capital. The temples of Samkaragaurisa and Sugandesha built by the king can be identified by their ruins at Pattan. Samkarapura did not, however, rise to significance due to the unpopularity of its founder. But it remained for a long time the centre of woollen manufactures and trade in cattle. Queen Didda

founded two towns, Abhimanyapura and Kankanapura. The former is not traceable and the latter may perhaps be marked by the present village of Kangan, 28 kilometres from Srinagar on the road to Sonemarg.

Administrative Divisions

The Valley of Kashmir has from early times been divided into two great parts, known by the modern names of Kamraz and Maraz, *Sans*, Kramarajya and Madavarajya. We find a frequent reference to these in Kaihana's and later Chronicles. According to the prevailing notions Kamraz comprises the part of the Valley below Srinagar on both sides of the Vitasta and Maraz the rest of the Valley above Srinagar. That the boundary of these two divisions was already in old times indicated by a line drawn through the capital is proved by a close examination of the Chronicle.²⁰

These two divisions have from early times been further subdivided into a number of small districts known at present 'Parganas' but designated in old times as 'Visaya'. The number, names and limits of these sub-divisions have been subject to considerable variations during the Hindu period. The great majority of Parganas as detailed by Abul Fazal in the *Ain-i-Akbari* and known in the Valley even now, can be safely assumed to have already existed during Hindu rule. This is proved by the fact that the names of several Parganas are found in their ancient forms in the *Rajatarangini* and the later Chronicles. But since these texts do not furnish us with a complete list of the Visayas, it is difficult to draw an accurate map of the administrative subdivisions of the Valley in ancient times. Abul Fazal, however, furnishes us a list of 38 Parganas, and Bates who prepared the latest is puts their number as 43 during the last century. This shows that though there have been some variations in the number and constitution of Paraganas from time to time, the main divisions and subdivisions of the Valley remained intact from early Hindu rule to the present day.

Population

There is unfortunately no record of the number of people inhabiting the Valley during any period of the Hindu rule. But the

large number of administrative sub-divisions, which goes back to an early date, may be taken as an indication of the dense population of the Valley. There is every reason to believe that even at a later period it was fairly large. The existence of a large number of village sites in all parts of the Valley, remains of an extensive system of irrigation, the number of temple ruins and the uniform tradition of the people — all point to the same conclusion.

The fact of Kashmir having a far greater population in ancient times helps to explain the curious traditional verse which puts the number of villages in Kashmir at 66,063. The verse is found twice in *Lokaprakasha* and has been alluded to in Jonaraja's Chronicle. Though that figure must have at all time implied a considerable exaggeration, it is nevertheless characteristic of the popular notion on the subject. Even Sharif-ud-din whose information, collected about 1400 AD, is on the whole accurate, records: "It is popularly believed that in the whole of the province — plains and mountains together — are comprised 100,000 villages, the land is thickly populated."²¹ It is curious that Mirza Haider, who had ruled Kashmir himself, copies this statement without modification or dissent.

Classes of Population

A close study of the *Rajatarangini* shows that the population of Kashmir in early times comprised several castes, among which Brahmins, Vaisyas, Sudras, Nisadas, Kiratas are frequently mentioned. The Rajputs or Rajaputras are associated with the fighting and the ruling caste. The Tantrins, Ekangas and Lavanyas seem to have been tribes of professional soldiers who in later times formed into formidable condottiere and became virtually king-makers. There is, however, no well-defined caste system mentioned either by Kshemendra or Kalhana. The reason is not far to seek. Buddhism, which was introduced into Kashmir by Asoka and subsequently flourished under the Kusans, had been accepted by the masses and was for a number of centuries the dominant faith in the Valley. Caste system hence had lost all rigidity and except for the Brahmins who maintained their traditions. Tenaciously and who were responsible later in re-establishing the Hindu faith among the people of Kashmir, and low-caste tribes who

followed the calling of scavengers, night-watchmen, and boatmen. Caste system, as prevalent in other parts of India, was absent. We even find men and women of the low-caste Dombas occupying positions of responsibility. Under Chakravarman the Dombas practically held all important posts in the court and two Domba women became the king's favourite queens.

Brahmins were, however, the privileged and honored caste and devoted mainly to the study of the scriptures and to the calling of priests and teachers. We also find Brahmins occupying high positions in the government of the country. Thus Mitrasarman was the chief minister of Lalitaditya and Devasarman of his grandson, Jayapida. Queen Didda's chief minister for a long time was Bhatta Phalguna. We also find the Brahmins in the army. Bujanga, the son of a Brahmin Samanta was employed by Samgramaraja in a responsible post in his army. Kalhana's father, Champaka, held for a long time the post of the commander of forts under king Harsa.²² Ajjaka, a Brahmin minister of Salhana, died in the battlefield while fighting against Sussala.²³ Lavaraja and Yasoraja, two Brahmins skilled in military exercises, were killed while fighting the assassins of Sussala.²⁴ Brahmins frequently took to arms during the unsettled times through which Kashmir passed often. A characteristic verse in the *Rajatarangini* mentions that in the peaceful times of Yasaskara, the Brahmin priests of temples sheathed their swords and again took to their peaceful avocations.

Besides the sacrificial fees, the main source of their income was the revenue from land-grants or *agraharas*, donated by kings, nobles and pious traders and landlords. It, therefore, follows that the Brahmins in Kashmir were mainly dependent on land and formed a class of small landlords. They also enjoyed the revenue of the villages endowed to temples. Sometimes they sold flowers, incense, and other requirements of worship to people visiting the temples or shrines.²⁵

Politically the Brahmins were a power to reckon with. Through the Purohita corporations who resorted to hunger strikes (*prayopavasa*) whenever any action taken by the king or his ministers went against their own interest or against those of the country, the Brahmin class acted as an effective check on the power of the king. Often the Brahmin assemblies were called upon to choose a suitable person for the throne

when there was an interregnum. It was such an assembly of Brahmins who selected Yasaskara as the king of Kashmir. During the reign of queen Didda we find the Brahmins holding a fast for removing Tunga from the office of chief ministership. Later in the reign of Didda's successor, Samgramaraja, they again resorted to a fast for the removal of Tunga from his high office. King Harsa had to exempt the Brahmins from forced labour as they undertook a fast. Sussala was once brought to his senses by a similar fast when, neglecting his kingly duties, the Damaras got an opportunity to oppress the people. Even as late as 1172 AD the Brahmins and other leading citizens chose a king when the throne fell vacant for want of a successor to king Vantideva.

Military Castes

The fighting castes of old Kashmir are represented by the Tantrins, Ekangas and Lavanyas. The Tantrins appear to have formed in Hindu times a military caste of strong organisation. They came into prominence during the early years of the tenth century AD when during the period of internal troubles between the succession of Partha and the defeat of Samkaravannan (906-36 AD) they organised themselves into a powerful condottiere and were at the height of their power. They acted as kingmakers. They raised different claimants to the throne of Kashmir one after the other, demanding larger and larger bribes from each puppet king and oppressed the land by their heavy exactions.

Subsequently they formed an important and often troublesome element in the army, in which they seem to have served as foot soldiers. They are in several references in the *Rajatarangini* clearly distinguished from the mounted forces and figure as royal guards.

The name Tantrin survives in the tribal name of Tantri which is borne by a considerable section of the Muhammadan agriculturist population of Kashmir. Families claiming the Tantri *Kram* or surname may be found in most of the towns and villages throughout the Valley.²⁶

The exact meaning of the term Ekangas cannot be established with certainty. It is frequently used in Books Five to Seven of the *Rajatarangini* for the designation of an armed force. Troyer assumed

them to have been royal bodyguards and various references in the Chronicle show that he is not wrong. They are mentioned along with Samantas (feudal lords), ministers, Tantrins and Kayasthas (officials) as influencing the affairs of the court and State.²⁷ They fought with the Tantrins, who supported another claimant to the crown,²⁸ and saved queen Didda from a rebel force, whose onslaught they opposed in orderly array at the palace gate.²⁹ They protected king Ananta with equal devotion against a pretender and were freed in return by the grateful prince from the harassing service at the *Aksapatala*.³⁰ It is in the vicinity of the *Aksapatala* that Harsa endeavored to collect a force of Ekangas for a final struggle.³¹

The later references show that Ekangas were a force organised in a military fashion but employed chiefly for police duties. Their modern counterpart would be customs and forest guards, and other revenue collecting agents. Till the beginning of the present century the 'Paltan Nizamat' was a regiment specially maintained in Kashmir for the support of the civil authorities in the collection of revenue, etc.

The Lavanyas who play a great part in the internal troubles which occurred in Kashmir during the closing years of the 11th and the beginning of 12th centuries, seems to have formed an important tribal section of the rural population who took to arms. Their name too survives in the modern *Kram* of Lon.³² The numerous passages in which the Lavanyas as a body of individuals are referred to tell us nothing about their origin, but show that many of them must have held a position of influence as landowners or tribal headmen. Upto Jonaraja's time the Lavanyas seem to have retained a certain importance as their name is of frequent occurrence in his chronicle, but by Srivara, the later historian, they are mentioned only once.

Among the other castes, the Nisadas were perhaps the original inhabitants of the Valley and were relegated to menial work by the Aryan settlers. We find a mention of the Nisadas in the *Rajatarangini* where they are designated as boatmen.³³ Similarly the low-caste Kiratas are mentioned as huntsmen who lived in forests and destroyed wild animals by raising fires or by laying traps. During recent excavations at Burzahom, a settlement of pit-dwellers was unearthed along with hunting equipment like stone daggers, etc. These definitely belonged

to a hunting class and Kiratas were perhaps their descendants. Though racially the Kiratas in the rest of India belonged to the Tibeto-Burman group, there is no such indication of their origin in Kashmir.

The Dombas have been frequently mentioned by Kalhana as a caste of menials. Sometimes they are associated with Chandalas.³⁴ Their exact occupation is not precisely indicated; they performed the duties. Dombas are mentioned as entertaining people with their music and dancing — they perhaps supplied the demand from common people for the much needed entertainment and relaxation.

The Chandalas seem to have been employed as night watchmen and the king's bodyguard.³⁵ They were proficient in the use of the slings and were fierce and cruel fighters. We find Chandalas being several times employed by different groups to assassinate their rivals. They were also executioners and were no doubt universally hated.

The economic structure of ancient Kashmir as in the rest of India was mainly based on the conception of private property and ownership of wealth. This implied that apart from agriculture which was the main source of production, people took to trade, industry and other professions. Owing to the geographical insulation of the Valley, and its limited natural resources, trade and commerce occupied a secondary position to agriculture. During the rule of the Kusans and later of the Karkotas, Kashmir came into direct contact with the commercial centres in India and Central Asia, which must have naturally given rise to a boom in trade and commerce. And hence we find a rich class of traders growing up. The large hoards of Kashmir coins of the Karkotas found recently in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar indicate a flourishing trade between Kashmir and the rest of India.

The Damaras

After the decline of the Karkota empire, Kashmir reverted to its traditional insulation and with the growth of population there was a pressure on land which favoured the growth of powerful feudal landlords—the Damaras.

The origin of the name Damara is shrouded in mystery. The important role that this landholder class played in the later history of the Hindu period, clearly indicates its power from large holdings of

land It is apparent from the mention of their seats in highly productive parts of the Valley and of their boorish manners which show them 'more like cultivators though they carry arms.'

Kalhana's first reference to the Damaras occurs in the Fourth Book of the *Rajatarangini* where among the maxims set forth by Lalitaditya is one directing the ruler to prevent hoarding of wealth by landlords as otherwise they would become powerful and rich Damaras and defy the orders of the king.³⁶ These maxims seem to have been put in the mouth of Lalitaditya by later historians, and indicate the rapid growth of the Damaras after his death. It was no doubt facilitated by the weak and instable reigns of later Karkota kings and the internecine warfare among the various pretenders. The rich landlords who employed a host of paid soldiers took the sides of these pretenders alternately and virtually became king-makers.

Though in the latter part of the Fifth Book the mention of the Damaras is comparatively less, we find that Didda and other rulers had to take recourse to strong measures to curb their power. After Didda's death, however, when again internecine conflicts took the Valley under their grip, the Damaras were virtually the rulers. In the struggles for the throne between Ananta and his son Kalasa, and between Utkarsa and Harsa, the Damaras took the side of one or the other and the final issue of the conflict depended mostly on their support. By the 12th century AD the Damaras had become very powerful. Sussala and Jayasimha spent the major part of their reigns in fighting them, but did not succeed in completely breaking their power. They had enormous wealth, a large army and strongholds in many important palaces in the Valley. Gargachandra, one of the Damaras, was so powerful that without his support no king could conveniently occupy the throne. 'The fortified residences of the Damaras frequently mentioned by the term *upavasa* were, like the castles of medieval feudal lords, centres of territorial divisions or Parganas (ancient Visayas) in which though they may have often comprised not more than a couple of villages, the king's authority could assert itself only by armed force at times of unrest. This condition of things continued for centuries after Kalhana's time, far into the Muhammadan period, and its recollection still lingers in the tradition of the agricultural

population of Kashmir.'

With the acquisition of wealth and power, the social status of the Damaras also rose and we find them entering into matrimonial relation with the traditional ruling class and even the royal families. In Kshemendra's *Samayamatrika*, a Damara named Samarasimha appears as a wealthy, respectable and cultured citizen.³⁷

A Damara's estate ordinarily passed to his descendants on his death, but it was not by inheritance alone that a man could enter this privileged class. The *Rajatarangini* mentions the case of the merchant who amassed sufficient riches to purchase a vast estate and gradually raised himself to the position of a Damara. Similarly the income of a Damara did not depend entirely on the revenue of his agricultural estate. He could engage himself in trade and commerce as well.

This shows that the Damaras did not belong to any particular tribe or caste. Some have for instance been called Lavanya Damaras, or Damaras who originally belonged to the Lavanya tribe.

But though Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* supplies us with enough material to trace the rising power of the Damaras, it leaves us in the dark about the conditions under which their landed property, the basis of their power and influence, was acquired and held. If we compare the conditions prevailing in other parts of India, where a similar class of landed aristocracy is still extant, the view suggests itself that a kind of servicetenure, the grant of land in return for military or other services, may have been the original foundation of the system. Yet even as regards this point the absence of an exact data prevents us from going beyond mere conjecture. Still less can we hope to ascertain the exact relations in which the Damaras may have stood towards their sovereign and towards the cultivators in matters of revenue, administration, etc. It is well known how multifarious and complicated the conditions regulating feudal tenure usually are even within a single Indian province or Native State."³⁸

Position of Women

A striking feature of the political history of Kashmir during the Hindu period is the important and sometimes decisive role played by women in the affairs of the State. Be it as queens or as ordinary

inmates of the harem or as courtesans, women come frequently into the picture.

This position of importance implies that women of at least the upper classes received education of not only a general nature but in diplomacy and statecraft too. Bilhana, the poet laureate at the court of the Chalukya king Parmadi (11th century AD), says in the last canto of his "Life of Vikramankadeva", while describing his homeland, that the women of Kashmir spoke Sanskrit and Prakrit fluently.³⁹ There is, however, reason to believe that women of lower castes did not have this distinction and they had to be content with their vernacular speech.⁴⁰ A closer study of Damodargupta's *Kuttanimata Kavya* shows that women of higher castes and affluent classes received education which included the sexual sciences of Vatsyayans, Dattaka, Vitaputra and Rajaputra; the art of dancing as propounded by Bharata as in the treatise of Visakhila; music as for instance in the works of Dantila. They had moreover to learn botany, painting, needlework, woodwork, claymodelling, cookery and receive practical training in instrumental music, singing and dancing.⁴¹ No wonder we find the women of Kashmir as active as men in the discharge of public duties. There is no indication of women being in seclusion or relegated to the background. The use of the veil was non-existent. We find for instance women seated along with other officials and ministers in the court of Harsa.⁴² We find them fighting alongside men on foot and on horseback. Vijayamalla while retreating after the unsuccessful coup against his brother, king Harsa, was ably assisted by his brave wife who clinging to him on his horse kept the pursuers at bay. Both of them and their horse swam across the flooded vitasta near shadipur and thus escaped to the country of the Dards.⁴³ We have examples of heroism displayed by queen Didda and later by Kota Rani.

The women enjoyed equal rights with men is amply proved by the anointment of queens along with their husbands at the time of coronation. When, for instance, Harsa soon after his release from captivity was about to ascend the throne, "there came before him Sugala, hiding by boldness her great offence, to claim her position as the chief queen."⁴⁴ We find several queens making their husband's rule a success by their wise handling of the administration and the royal

treasury. A notable example is of queen Suryamati, wife of king Ananta who, finding the king weak and about to be deposed by the rebellious Damaras, stepped in upon the scene and by her wise and judicious selection of ministers and officials restored the confidence of the people in the king's administration. Later she even forced the king to abdicate in favour of his son Kalasa who, she hoped, would prove a more capable ruler.⁴⁵ Similarly queen Didda dominated her weak husband Kshemagupta and virtually ruled in his name. Later as regent and queen she controlled the destinies of the kingdom for half a century. That the queens of Kashmir were considered to be politically as important and powerful as the kings is illustrated by a passage in the *Rajatarangini* where a forgotten Raj named Sarada, "an insignificant person who lived in Lohara", was made use of for the purpose of giving her sanction to legalise the rebel action of Lothana, a pretender to the throne of Jayasimaha. The rebels had "first conspired with the wife of the king-designate", which also shows the active participation of the ladies of the ruling class in political work.⁴⁶

That women owned private property is illustrated by another illuminating reference by Kalhana. While enumerating the chief Damara lords who remained neutral in the rebellion raised by Bhoja, another pretender to Jayasimaha's throne, he mentions a Damara lady also who held the fief in her own right.⁴⁷

Women had thus "emerged from the domestic into the political stage, were free, owned immovable property, managed their own estates and even fought at the head of their troops." Regarding the proper age of marriage there is no evidence forthcoming from the *Rajatarangini*. But it seems that pre-puberty marriages were not in vogue.⁴⁸ We learn, for instance, from a passage describing Sussala's fight for the throne that the wife of his ally the powerful Damara lord, Garagachandra, brought her two youthful daughters one of whom was married to Sussala and another to his son Jayasimha.⁴⁹ It brings another significant practice into view that of inter-caste marriages. Damara Kosthaka was married to a Rajput lady. We have the example of Chakravarman marrying *Domba* girls and elevating them to the position of chief queens.

The family life of the king and the nobility was polygamous. The

seraglios of the kings were full of queens, concubines from all castes and their example was followed by the courtiers and aristocrats. Polyandry does not, however, seem to have been in vogue, though in certain hill states bordering on Kashmir and among some aboriginal tribes it might have been practised. Since the Hindu system of joint-family was universal, we find the daughter-in-law under the constant supervision and control of her mother-in-law. Queen Suryamati, for example, treated the wives of her son, Kalasa, harshly and required them to clean the palace with their own hands.⁵⁰ Windows were expected to live a pure life, devoid of all luxury. The ornaments or gorgeous dress were forbidden to them.⁵¹ But the remarriage of widows and of other women do not seem to have been absolutely forbidden. We have the example of king Pratapaditya II marrying the wife of a rich merchant Nona. Kota Rani's remarriage with Udyanadeva after the death of her husband Rinchin, shows that widow marriage was permitted.

This brings us to the custom of sati, the burning of a widow on the funeral pyre of her husband. The custom seems to have been widespread among at least the ruling classes. The Damara widows, for instance, did not follow their husbands to the pyre. In a passage where he praises the wife of the Damara Kosthaka who became a sati when her husband was mortally wounded, Kalhana does not omit to contrast this conduct with that of the ordinary Damara women who did not show much regard for their character as widows. Kalhana plainly attributes the exceptional conduct of Kosthaka's wife to her noble descent from a family of Rajputs.⁵² In Somadeva's stories of *Kathasaritasagara* we find several instances of this custom. The *Rajatarangini* gives a number of historical cases of widows burning themselves at the death of their husbands. Surendravati and two other queens of Samkaravarman were cremated with his body.⁵³ At the death of Yasaskara, his wife Trailokyadevi followed him on to the funeral pyre.⁵⁴ Queen Suryamati burned herself along with the dead body of her husband, king Ananta. Mammanika and six other queens accompanied king Kalasa to death, and so did Kumudalekha to her husband, Malla.

No only was the widow expected to become sati along with the

dead body of her husband, she burned herself even separately after some days of his death as did, for instance, Jayamati, the queen of Uccala. Nor was the custom of sati confined to the royal family alone. Malla, the wife of Bhogasena, the chief justice of Uccal., followed her husband to death. Sometimes courtesans accompanied their masters into fire. Jayamati a harlot of king Kalasa and Sahaja a concubine of king Utkarsa, entered the pyre of their dead masters. The custom of sati was so deep-rooted that even mothers, sisters and other relatives burned themselves at the death of their beloved deceased. Gajja cremated herself with her son Ananda, Vallabha with her brother-in-law Malla and the sister of Dilhabhattaraka with her brother. The custom seems to have been in general vogue long after the end of Hindu rule, when Sultan Sikandar considering it contrary to the law of Islam, stopped it forthwith.⁵⁵

From a perusal of Kshemendra's and Damodargupta's works, it appears that prostitution was popular in society during the Hindu period. Because of their graces of form and manners and accomplishments, the courtesans enjoyed high social esteem. We learn also from contemporary literature that they were renowned for their beauty, wit and other accomplishments as well as their wealth and luxury.⁵⁶ They often adorned the king's inner apartments and were usually the power behind the throne. But the immoral atmosphere among certain classes gave rise to, and fostered the growth of, certain evil practices in the society, one of which was the institution of *devadasi* or dedication of girls to the temple deities.

The custom seems to have been in practice all-over India from early times. Kalhana mentions that king Jalauka⁵⁷ gave hundred ladies of his seraglio who were well versed in dancing and singing to serve in the temple of Jyestarudra. It seems that the custom continued during the Karkota rule as well. Lalitaditya, in the course of a hunting expedition, came across two dancing girls dedicated to a temple. Kalasa married a dancing girl, Kayya, who was dedicated to a temple. Utkarsa, his son, "had seen Sahaja, who had been a dancing girl attached to a temple, on the dancing-stage, and had taken her as a concubine into the royal seraglio."⁵⁸ When she had been a courtesan, she had been favoured also by Harsa, who implored her not to become a sati after

Utkarsa's suicide. Kalhana himself was an eyewitness of superannuated dancing women in the temples of the Valley.⁵⁹

The practice of *devadasi* seems to have received opposition from the honest and pure-minded section of the people. Alberuni refers to such opposition in the north-west India of his time, but laments that this opposition was of no avail since the kings and nobles supported the custom.

Administration

According to Kalhana the sovereignty of the State lies in the king, who is of divine origin and has absolute power, in the opening chapter of his work we find an allusion to the divine origin of the king when on Lord Krishna's advice queen Yasovati was made the regent of her infant son on the death of king Damodara. The nobles and ministers grumbled at a woman being crowned queen, but Lord Krishna appeased them by reciting the following verse as quoted in the Nilamatpurana: "*Kashmir is Parvati; know that its king is a portion of Siva. Though he be wicked, a wise man who desires his own prosperity will not despise him.*"⁶⁰

The Buddhist conception of Monarchy also conformed to this theory, though in a different way. The king is called Sarva Mahasakya and we find an echo of it in the *Rajatarangini* in connection with the story of an attempted assassination of king Jaluka, Asoka's son, by a witch. Having failed to achieve her black objective, the witch addresses the king in the following words: "*The excited Buddhas sent me forth to kill you. But then the Bodhisattvas called me and gave me the following directions: 'That king is a great Sakya (Mahasakya). You cannot hurt him; but in his presence, O good one, you will obtain liberation from darkness (sin).'*"⁶¹

The king on his part had to be humble and modest, versed in sacred and secular lore. He received his training for the high office from his childhood and particularly when he occupied the position of Yuvaraj. We have an idea of the strenuous training that a Yuvaraj received from an autobiographical recollection of Samkaravarman. In reply to his son's remonstrances not to burden the poor subjects with heavy exactions, Samkaravarman disdainfully says: "*When I was a boy*

I also had, like you, great affection for the people. My father (Avantivarman) was making me run along his horses barefooted and with heavy Armour when hot, and in thin clothing when cold, to make me feel the hardships the common people endure, so that when I ascended the throne, I would not be too hard upon my subjects. But in spite of these practical lessons, I have become hard-hearted -the concomitance of authority and despotism - and I would entreat you not to behave in a harder-manner than myself when you attain royal dignity.⁶²

Though the office of kingship was hereditary, we have several instances of kings being placed on the throne of Kashmir either by the council of ministers or by a committee of nobles and Brahmins. Meghavahana and Matrigupta were chosen by the ministers⁶³ and when queen Sugandha (904-6A.D) wanted to nominate a fit successor to the throne she had to seek the advice and permission of the ministers.⁶⁴ Similarly king Yasaskara (939-48 AD) had also to secure the approval of the ministers to the consecration, before his death, of Varnata as king.

Council of Ministers

In order to carry on successfully the heavy work of administration, the king depended on the assistance of his ministers. In the pre-Asokan period, the government of Kashmir was of the same pattern as in other States of India, with seven officials or ministers-the Judge, the Revenue Superintendent, the Treasurer, the Commander of the Army, the Envoy, the Purohita and the Astrologer. With the extension of Asoka's empire to Kashmir, it seems the system of Mauryan administration was introduced. Jaluka increased the number of offices to and by this act, according to Kalhana, inaugurated the constitutional system of Yudhisthira,⁶⁵ meaning thereby the 18 Departments of State mentioned in the *Mahabharata* (II 5-38) and *Ramayana* (II 100-36). These were the Councillor, the Purohita, Heir Apparent, Generalissimo, Chamberlain, Steward of the Royal Household, Superintendent of Prisons, Treasurer, Auditor of the Treasury, Officer with Judicial Functions, Prefect of the City, Engineer of Works, Lord Chief Justice, President of the Assembly, Warden of Criminal Jurisdiction, Warden of Fortifications, Warden of Marches, and

Conservator of Forests.

The system continued till the time of Lalitaditya who created five new functionaries of high status (*Panchamahasabada*) which were scarcely more than mere court titles.⁶⁶ We find the title of *Panchamahasabada* bestowed upon his chief minister, Mitrasarman. Another minister to have borne it was Jayadatta in Jayapida's reign. Utpala, the maternal uncle of Chippatajayapida, who usurped all royal power also held this title.

Of all the ministers the *Sarvadhikara* or chief minister was the most important and powerful. His position was 'above anybody' and he was directly chosen by the ruler. Judging from the comparatively rare mention of the post in Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*, it may be concluded that it did not figure regularly as the highest step in the official hierarchy, but was bestowed only on dignitaries of exceptional influence and power.⁶⁷ This is indicated by the fact that Tanga,⁶⁸ queen Didda's all-powerful minister bore this title and also by the administrative measures recorded of *Sarvadhikarin* Gauraka.⁶⁹ It seems that generally the powers attached to this post were divided among several ministers.⁷⁰

From Kalhana's account it appears that the prime minister dictated the policy of the State and if the king was weak or ineffective, it was he who exercised the supreme power of the Government.

The next in rank and importance was the minister in charge of revenue administration, known as *Grahakriyadhikarin*. He also received his appointment direct from the king. It appears from Kshemendra that this post, which was originally created by Samkaravarman, was one of the most important offices and it was the highest ambition of every revenue officer to occupy this position.⁷¹ He had under him the official treasurer (*ganjavara*) and five secretaries (*divira*). All domestic expenses, such as grants to temples, Brahmins, the poor and the strangers, grants for the fodder of domestic animals and salaries of royal servants could be incurred only with his consent. Seven officers whom he could appoint worked under him.

Another important minister was the one in charge of foreign affairs (*Samdhivigrahika*) and of peace and war, and relations with other kingdoms. He drafted and signed treaties on behalf of the king.

We have an important reference to his powers in a verse in the *Rajatarangini* where Lalitaditya's minister of foreign affairs, Mitrasarman, objects to the draft of the treaty with yasovarman of Kanauj, on the point of a diplomatic usage.⁷²

The office of the minister-in-waiting (*Podagra*) combined the duties of revenue collection and finance administration. It is probable that the superintendent of *Aksapatala* or the department of accountant-general and the Pattapadhaya, the recorder of official documents, functioned under him.⁷³ It is evident from several passages in the Chronicle that the superintendent of the Aksapatala held an important post having under his command a contingent of Ekangas or military police. "It is curious to note", says Stein, "that the modern Daftar-i-Nizamat which until the recent administrative changes represented in Kashmir the Accountant-general's office, had actually under its control the force called 'Paltan Nizamat' to which that of Ekangas closely corresponds."⁷⁴

Judicial Administration

All Hindu theories lay the greatest stress on the administration of justice as an essential part of the protection to which the people are entitled from the government.⁷⁵ According to Manu, the king should normally preside over the law-courts and be assisted by Brahmins and experienced councillors. The king is to hold court in a separate building in his own palace. The delegation of this regal duty to a chief justice is equally well known to Indian tradition. This delegate, who in the Dharma texts figures under many different names may well have taken his title of *Rajasthanadhipika* or simply *Rajasthana* from the royal palace in which his court was held.⁷⁶

From a critical study of the *Rajatarangini* we find that the functions of *Rajasthanadhipika* were connected with the administration of justice. It was evidently a high post, judging from its mention along with the commander-in-chief and the Lord of Marches. The list of great officers given at the commencement of the Fourth Book of *Lokaprakasa* describes him as looking after the protection of the subjects. Below the chief-justice there were other subordinate judges who were designated as *tantrapati* and *Rajasthanamantrinah*. Judicial powers

seem to have been exercised by other civil officers too, for instance, the accounts-office called Seda is described as a Rajasthana in one of the passages of the Chronicle.⁷⁷

The chief of police department was called *Dandanayaka* or *Dandadhikarin*.⁷⁸ He presided over an elaborate police force spread all over the kingdom. There was a regular system of espionage, the spies being known as *chakrika*, *pisuna* and *pumschalaka*.⁷⁹

District and Village Administration

Below the Council of Ministers the most important office in the governmental machinery was that of the *Mandalesa* or governor. As already mentioned, the Valley was divided into two administrative divisions Kamraz (*Kramarajya*) and Maraz (*Madavarajya*) which were put under the charge of a *Mandalesa*.⁸⁰ A third division, that of Lohara, was added during the rule of the Lohara dynasty. The *Mandalesa* was the head of administration of the division. Both the divisions of Kamraz and Maraz were sub-divided into a number of *visayas* corresponding to the modern Paraganas. Each *visaya*, according to Kshemendra, was under an officer known as *margapati*.⁸¹ He supervised the collection of taxes, administration of justice and maintenance of law and order. He inspected roads and bridges and checked the accounts of village officials.

The administration had the village as the unit and the institution of village officials existed from ancient times.⁸² The two important officials of village administration were the headman (*Skandaka*), the modern Muqadam or Lambardar, whose function, besides collecting the land revenue and other cesses, was to look after the welfare of the village and ensure a liaison between the villagers and the government. He has since ancient days been an important factor in rural administration. His office was generally hereditary, but subject to change by the *Margapati*. A specified percentage of revenues collected by the *Skandaka* was retained by him as his emolument.

The other important village official was the village accountant (*Gramakayastha*) who kept the papers showing the area of the holdings of the villagers, with their revenue assessment etc. He held his office at the will of the *margapati* and as we learn from the *Rajatarangini*

paid bribes to him for retention of his post.⁸³ Several kings (for example, Samkaravarman) levied on the villages, in addition to regular assessment, contributions for the monthly pay of the *Skandaka* and *Gramakayastha*.

The major towns and cities were under the administrative charge of the *Nagaradhikrta*, also called *Nagaradhipa* (the City-Prefect). He was in charge of collecting house and scavenging tax, and other cesses. He inspected weights and measures of traders and checked abuses which caused disorder in commercial transactions. He levied fines on house-holders guilty of the immoral conduct of their womenfolk and punished those who had carnal intercourse with dancing girls received in households as wedded wives. He was evidently an inspector of morals.⁸⁴ The maintenance of law and order of the city was one of his duties and we find one of these officials, *Vijayasimha* distinguishing himself by the suppression of all thieves.⁸⁵ The *Nagaradhipa* was also expected to organise the defence of the city in times of emergency. The city-prefect, Naga, was in charge of a large force and was entrusted with the defense of the city when Sussala and Uccala attacked king Harsa.⁸⁶ Another city-prefect, Janaka, was called by Sussala to suppress a revolt of his troops which broke out in the city.⁸⁷

Yasaskara appointed four prefects in order to increase his revenue by the contributions they had to offer in competition. The officials had of course to recoup themselves by increased taxation from the citizens.⁸⁸ Bhuyya, a contemporary city-prefect of queen Didda, is said to have encouraged her in her religious edification.⁸⁹

From a critical study of the *Rajatarangini*, it appears that Kashmir had developed a well-organised and efficient system of executive, revenue and judicial administration, which explains the continuity and maintenance of a smooth government even in times when there was a rapid change of rulers. With slight modifications effected now and then to suit the fiscal policy of various kings, the administrative machinery mainly followed a uniform pattern throughout the Hindu period.

Kayasthas - The Civil Servants

To man this efficient but complicated machinery, there was evolved

a highly trained class of civil servants known as *Kayasthas*. The term Kayastha did not denote any particular caste, but applied to all the members of bureaucracy—from the lowest clerk to the highest official. The career of a Kayastha was open to all castes and classes of population. Kalhana specifically mentions one instance of a low class *aramika* (vegetable gardener) entering into the ranks of bureaucracy as a Kayastha. A Kayastha drew his salary from the royal treasury probably on the monthly basis, but besides this he often usurped part of the taxes he collected, and also realised unjust and often vexatious bribes and other perquisites from the people who came under his charge. While describing the conditions of the Valley under Jayapida's reign, Kalhana says that Kayasthas carried off most of the taxes realised from the people, depositing only a small fraction in the king's treasury. Both Kshemendra and Kalhana make many a hard hit at the vices of the Kayasthas—their greed for money, dishonest dealings, low moral character and pride.

But due to their efficiency in conducting the day-to-day administration, the Kayasthas, particularly during the later centuries of Hindu rule, acquired enormous power. It was for their capacity to raise new taxes that "the kings of Kashmir became habituated to looking at the faces of the Kayasthas for guidance, and to following the direction of their servants."⁹⁰

The *narmamala* of Kshemendra written during the reign of king Ananta, contains a detailed account of the Kayasthas and mentions a large number of posts held by them. The increase in the number of official posts denotes a greater interference with the private life of individuals and the close inspection of their doings. Particular attention was paid to the realisation of revenue from landholdings. This naturally made the Kayasthas unpopular with the masses, and to win the support of the latter, some of the kings like Uccala, adopted severe measures to curb the power of the Kayasthas.⁹¹ But they were so entrenched that when a century later king Jagadeva tried to imitate uccala in his policy towards the Kayasthas, he had to suffer defeat at their hands and was forced to abdicate and leave the Valley.⁹² But the Kayasthas had to leave the Valley as a result of wide spread hatred of them by the masses. The later Hindu and the first Muslim rulers had to fill

up their vacancies by the Kashmiri Pandits who were well-read.

Military Organisation

The king's armed forces were under the charge of the *Kampanes* also called *Kampanadhipati*, *Kampanapati*, etc, the commander-in-Chief.⁹³ He was one of the highest functionaries of the State, next only to the Yuvaraj or heir-apparent, and the prime minister. He organised the foreign expeditions and was the leader of the royal troops in fights, sieges, etc. Under him there were other army officers some of whom were designated as *Kampanodgrahaka*.

But the most important post in the military organisation of Kashmir was that of *Dvarapati*, also called *Dvaradhipa*, the commander of frontier passes. The kings of Kashmir from ancient times paid special attention to the defence of the passes leading into the Valley and established watch-stations and forts (*tranga*) by which a careful guard was kept over the passes. Numerous passages in the Chronicles show that they served at the same time the purposes of defence, customs and police administration. They were garrisoned by troops under special commanders designated as *Drangesa* or *Drangadhipa*. The control over all these frontier stations and the command of the 'Marches' was vested in one high State officer, known by the title of *Dvarapati*.

The history of Kashmir shows that it was on the defence of these frontier passes that the safety of the Valley depended and hence it is understandable why the post of the *Dvaradhipa* wielded so much influence and power. We are told that the post required soldierly qualities and implied rough duties.⁹⁴ We generally find him engaged in fighting the troublesome tribes on the frontiers of the Valley and warding off the inroads of numerous pretenders to the throne of Kashmir, or preventing their escape by closing the routes leading out.⁹⁵ The *Dvaradhipa* also exercised judicial power over the commandants of the forts.⁹⁶ It is clear from Kalhana's expressions recording the frequent transfer of the *Dvar* office in the troubled times of the beginning of the 12th century that the charge of the 'Gate' was never held by more than one person. It signifies a unity of command over all the passes.

Ancient Kashmir had long and brilliant military traditions. Being a small Valley, favoured by nature with a beautiful landscape and rich and fertile soil, it was coveted by people from the inhospitable regions of Central Asia and Tibet. Naturally, Kashmir had to perfect its military organisation for self-defence. During the time of the Indo-Greek occupation as also when it was a part of the Kusan empire, Kashmiris received a thorough schooling in new methods of warfare. But basically these conformed to the traditional military organisation as prevalent in the rest of India. We thus learn of the preparations made by Embisaros (Abhisares), the astute king of Abhisaras (Poonch and Nowshera) to oppose, in alliance with Poros, the army of Alexander.⁹⁷

With the extension of the Mauryan empire to Kashmir under Asoka it was but natural that the military organisation as perfected by them should have been introduced there. Kalhana informs us that the army of Kashmir comprised the traditional four arms—the elephants, cavalry, infantry and litters (in place of the chariots in the plains) with their eighteen fold division.⁹⁸ Each of these arms would naturally fall under the control of a distinct authority. There was, besides, the well-organised department of supplies and transport. Kashmir being an alpine State with difficult mountain paths, the use of wheeled carriages was not practicable. In their place there developed a system of *corvée* in the Valley. All able bodied youth who did not otherwise join any combatant wing of the army, were liable to be called upon to carry rations, fodder for horses and elephants and other war supplies for the army on the march.⁹⁹ It seems that during the time of the Imperial Karkotas, services of these load carriers were paid for, as huge amounts of money collected during foreign campaigns in loot and tribute were available for this.¹⁰⁰ Samkaravarman, and later kings, whose expeditions did not meet with much success, had to take recourse to *begar* or forced labour.

War Elephants

The elephant was used both for carriage, attack and defence.¹⁰¹ Although not of much use in the hills, the elephant was a tower of strength in battles fought on the plains of India. Elephants

seem to have been procured from the forests of Vindhya, Assam and Kalinga.¹⁰² They were protected with armour on the head, joints and other parts of their huge body. But often they were more a liability than an asset in a battle. King Harsa, for instance, who came out in person to fight the rebels in Srinagar had to suffer a terrible defeat when his fighting elephant, hit in joints by arrows from the rebel forces, "raised a trumpeting roar and turning back trampled down with his feet his own force. Attacked by the elephant which had turned hostile the foot and horse of the army were routed."¹⁰³

The Cavalry

The main strength of the army, however, lay in its cavalry. Kashmir is fortunate in having a rich pasture land and mountain meadows which are admirably suited for horse-breeding.¹⁰⁴ Kalhana's references to swift and well-bred horses of kings and their armies, show the import into the Valley of the famous thoroughbreds of Central Asia and Afghanistan.¹⁰⁵ Horse was naturally the aeroplane of ancient warfare; on its speed and mobility depended the fate of a battle. Both the rider and the mount were protected by armour. Judging from his numerous references to the horse, Kalhana, it seems must himself have been a horseman. He tells us that his father Charnpakahad had a distute over a mare with the crown prince Bhoja.¹⁰⁶ His account shows that the stability of the ruler of Kashmir depended upon the superiority of his cavalry and large treasures were expended in the purchase of thoroughbreds.¹⁰⁷

The horseman carried two javelins and buckler, a short sword, and wore chain-armour and helmet. It is interesting to find a reference in Kalhana to the leather cuirass.¹⁰⁸ So popular with the golden Horde of Genghis Khan which centuries later we find in the equipment of the officers of the famous Maratha cavalry. We have perhaps the best pen-picture of the arms and costume of a warrior of ancient Kashmir in the following description of Chakravarman's triumphant entry into Srinagar at the time of his restoration to the throne of Kashmir: "*With his noble charger proudly curveting in the centre of the horse-guards; raising the helmet when it slipped with the left hand which held the bridle, the ear-rings lit up by the glinting hilt which was held in the other hand*

*moist with perspiration: his face terrifying with the knitting of the eyebrows, being irritated by the pressure on the neck of his high and stiff Armour, threatening in bursts of anger the plunderers who had looted the shops and reassuring the affrighted citizens with signs of the head and the eye while the rattle of his kettle-drums, hindering the benedictory pronouncements of the citizens, rent the hearing—Chakravarman, resplendent in military triumph, made his entry into the city.*¹⁰⁹

The Infantry

The infantry were all armed with a broad and heavy double-edged sword, suspended from the left shoulder and a long buckler of undressed ox-hide. In addition to these arms, each man carried either a javelin or a bow or a mace. Besides, he had a double-edged long knife.¹¹⁰ carried in a belt.

Kalhana gives at several places in his history description of chase, tourneys, duels and battles.¹¹¹ It appears that the infantry were highly trained in the art of shooting arrows and unerring darts.¹¹² He often refers to the "shower of arrows",¹¹³ which were at times treated with poison. While describing the heroic exploits of Kandarpa, the commander-in-chief of king Harsa, Kalhana records that he used burning arrows smeared over with vegetable oil, in the battle of Rajauri. Struck by these the enemy caught fire and fled in bewilderment, believing that he knew the use of the fire-weapon (*agnya-astra*).¹¹⁴

Another weapon in which Kashmiri soldiers specialised was the sling. With a round but sharp stone tied to its end, they flung the stone with unerring accuracy at the target. Kalhana mentions the use of the sling as early as the time of Jayapida. On his return from a conquering expedition in the south, he found the use surper Jajja on the throne of Kashmir. In the thick of the battle fought between the forces of Jayapida and Jajja, a Chandala youth flung a stone with his sling at Jajja's face which killed him outright.¹¹⁵ The sling was the favourite weapon of Kashmiris till as late as the time of Gulab Singh who put a stop to the frequent mimic battles between youth of different wards of Srinagar who used to turn out with slings and stones and played a very serious and earnest game.¹¹⁶

Strength and Composition of the Army

We have no reliable record of the strength of Kashmir army. It must have naturally varied from time to time. Kalhana, however, records that Jayapida's army including that of his feudatories comprised 80,000 litters (*Kaniratha*), whereas that of Lalitaditya had over a lakh.¹¹⁷ Samkaravarman's army, he says, consisted of 900,000 of foot soldiers, 300 elephants and 100,000 of horsemen.¹¹⁸ Apparently, these are highly exaggerated figures. Vincent Smith writing about Chandragupta Maurya's army remarks "incredible though they (the figures of its strength) may seem at first sight, they are justified by our knowledge of the unwieldy hosts used in war by Indian kings in later ages. For instance, Nunez, the Portuguese chronicler, who was contemporary with Krishna Deva, the Raja of Vijaynagar, in the sixteenth century (1509-29 AD), affirms that that prince led against Raichur an army consisting of 703,000 foot, 42,700 horse, and 551 elephants, besides camp followers."¹¹⁹

From a critical study of the *Rajatarangini* it appears that recruitment to various wings of the army was open to all castes and classes. We have already noticed that Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and agriculturists held responsible posts in the army and even the low caste Chandalas and dombas took to military service. Kashmir kings frequently recruited soldiers from the martial tribes of the Punjab and Frontier provinces. Lalitaditya is said to have Turuska or Central Asian soldiers in his army. Harsa had several officers and troops from Muhammadanised Turks.

Weapons were manufactured in State factories, though the manufacture of ordinary arms by the people was not banned altogether. The State maintained armories for the regular supply of arms to troops.¹²⁰ It appears that the army was in direct employ of the king and the soldiers and officers received their monthly salaries from the royal treasury. During a march outside their cantonment, the troops were entitled to a allowance.¹²¹ Jayapida had to institute a mobile treasury and accounts office for the troops on the march (*calaganja*).¹²² There was a special officer to procure and store fodder for the horses¹²³ and another to look after the uniform and equipment of the soldiers.¹²⁴ Like the soldiers of Napoleon, the ranks in the Kashmir army wore red

trousers.¹²⁵

Strategy in Warfare

References to, and descriptions of, actual warfare are numerous in the *Rajatarangini*. Particularly interesting is the detailed account of Jayapida's capture in Nepal, his escape from close confinement and the subsequent assault of the Kashmir troops on the fort. We have also accounts of sieges laid to and defence of, impregnable forts of Lohara, Dugdhghata and Sirahsila in Kashmir. Interesting light is thrown on the strategy employed by various commanders in conducting their campaigns. For instance when Dhanya the commander of Jayasimha's forces laid siege to the fort of Sirahsila, the seat of a rebel Damara, he created block-houses and also wooden sheds for his own troops under the protecting cover of arrows from a contingent posted on commanding positions on the hill. During night the besieging forces used so to light up the ground around the castle that "even an ant could not have moved out by the main road without being noticed." For its water-supply, the castle depended either on the rivulet to its east or on the river. From the former the besieged were at once cut off when Dhanya occupied the higher ridge to the south, and at the same time naturally also the eastern bank of the rivulet. The siege was so severe and effective that very soon the garrison had to surrender.¹²⁶

The element of surprise was always resorted to by the military commanders. When for instance, Tunga, the commander-in-chief of Didda's forces, was severely punished by the forces of the chief of Rajuri in a battle in a defile, he led a small force and "suddenly penetrated into Rajuri by another route and burnt it down entirely." This diversion not only gave him complete victory, but he was able to extricate his forces caught up in the defile.¹²⁷

Similarly Sussala's Damara supporters who being themselves mostly on foot and afraid of facing the royal cavalry in the plain in traversed a longer and difficult path skirting the mountains; and taking the king's forces by surprise captured the forts in the suburbs of Srinagar.¹²⁸ The soldiers arraigned in the battlefield vied with one another in showing their willingness to fight. The impatient soldiers got, so to say, intoxicated by the noise of kettle-drums and the battle cries of

their comrades. We have a vivid picture of a battle scene in the *Rajatarangini* of Srivara, of its 'mighty clash of arms providing the thunder of applause': *The soldiers called out to one another saying 'come', 'stand here', where do you go', 'you are mine.'* *The setting sun behind the Kashmirians shone on the points of their swords, as if to assure them of victory. Eager for fame, the warriors moved in the field of battle, each trying to go first, even like bees in the garden, eager for flowers, soldiers showed the movements of their bodies by their various postures, even as actors do in a dance on the stage. Arrows poured forth like rain from the cloud-like army whose arms flashed like lightning, and whose sound was like the sound the thunder.*"¹²⁹

The soldiers had to live in encampments and their life was hard and rigorous. And yet they had ample opportunity for festivity and merry-making. Kalhana says that during the expedition of Lalitaditya the soldiers enjoyed the wine of palm trees after their victories in the South.¹³⁰ They also brought back riches when they returned to their homes. But it is not always that victorious Kashmir arms were carried to distant places. Often the Valley was attacked by hostile kings and chiefs from across the border, and the army was called upon to beat them back.

Fortifications

This reminds us of the frontier and internal defences of Kashmir. As already mentioned the rulers of Kashmir took particular care to set up watch-stations on the passes leading into Kashmir and built forts on commanding positions there. The art of fortification was highly developed.

The forts were so planned as to be able to stand a prolonged siege. Tanks were built for storing water and where this was not possible on account of hard rock and granite, arrangements were made to store snow in pits.¹³¹ These forts were garrisoned by small detachments of trusted troops under the command of an officer called *Kotapadati*. They corresponded to the *Kiladar* troops kept up in small detachments until a few years ago for the garrisoning of the numerous small forts in the hill-regions around Kashmir. These troops were permanently settled in particular forts, and generally held land in their

neighbourhood.¹³²

In the Valley proper there were forts of two types—land forts and water forts. The land forts were generally built on spurs of hills or on *Karewas*. As an instance of water fort we have the one built by Jayapida in his new town of Jayapura, called *Abhyantara Kotta* (modern Andarkot) or the 'Inner Castle', it occupied a strong position, being situated on a plateau surrounded on all sides by water.¹³³ It was here that Kota Rani, the last Hindu ruler, was besieged by and surrendered to the forces of Shah Mir.

During the troubled days of the later Karkota kings and after, we find the Damara lords building their castles at their seats, and from there defying the writ of the king. These Damaras came to be designated as Kotta (castle). Rajas and Kalhana and the later Chroniclers are full of descriptions, often humorous, of the way they vaunted authority in their fiefs.

Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir, has from ancient times been its political and cultural centre. Strangely enough, it has had no fortifications, except perhaps the fort on the Hari Parbat hill, which was built as recently as the middle of the 18th century. "We can", says Stein, "attribute this exceptional position of Srinagar to the great natural advantages of its site. The frequent sieges which Srinagar underwent during the last reigns related by Kalhana, give us ample opportunity to appreciate the military advantages of the position of the city. With the exception of the comparatively narrow neck of high ground in the north, the city on the right river bank is guarded on all sides by water. On the south the river forms an impassable line of defence. The east is secured by the Dal Lake and the stream which flows from it on the west there stretch the broad marshes of the Anchar Lake close to the bank of the Vitasta."¹³⁴

Revenue and Expenditure

To meet the expenses of maintaining a large standing army, as well as of the civil services, the king resorted to taxation of various kinds. The sources of revenue tapped were many and varied. As the economy of Kashmir depended mainly on agriculture, the revenue

derived from land was the major item of the income of the government. The Rajatarangini is silent on the rate of taxation, but it may be assumed that in normal times the proportion was one-sixth of the produce as the share of the government. This increased to one-half during the times of the later kings. In one instance we learn that the king took away even the cultivators share of the produce for three consecutive years.¹³⁵ There is no indication of a proper settlement of land revenue, but the mention of the office of *Gramakayastha* or village accountant and of the *Skandaka* the modern Lambardar, indicates that there must have existed some sort of record showing what a man's holdings in land amounted to, and what his revenue liabilities were.

The land revenue seems to have been reckoned from early times in grain as is proved beyond all doubt by the detailed account of Abul Fazal, which shows that the revenue administration in Kashmir was similar in the Hindu times as well. In a territory isolated by great mountain barriers like Kashmir, such a system based on the staple produce of the state and the main foodstuff of its inhabitants, must, have specially recommended itself by its stability.

Over and above the land revenue, the cultivators had to pay other taxes, both direct and indirect. In realising the land revenue in rice or other produce, it was easy for the king's officials to systematically defraud the cultivator by the use of wrong weights.¹³⁶ Samkaravarman levied contributions for the monthly pay of the *Skandaka* and the *Gramakayastha* from the villagers. This levy seems to have continued down to the beginning of the present century, as in the statement in Lawrence's *Valley of taxes* levied from a Kashmiri village, we find in addition to the regular assessment, a 'Patwari tax', a Kanungo tax' and a 'Tax on account of establishment.' Samkaravarman instituted the system of levying *begar* (forced labour) from the villagers, originally for transport purposes, and later for fiscal extortion. Villagers, it appears, who did not run up to carry their allotted load, were fined at enhanced rates, and the same fine was levied the following year a second time from the village as a whole. Kalhana mentions 13 kinds of *begar* which a villager could be called upon to render to the king. Though they are not specified, they possibly included, like the *Kar-i-Begar* of the last

century, various requisitions for village produce free of payment, which could be made by officials.¹³⁷

Besides the revenue from land, the kings levied direct taxes of all sorts from town and city dwellers, from artificers and market shops. Jayapida resorted to several exactions, but his officials "carried off all property of the subjects while delivering only the smallest fraction of what they realised."¹³⁸ During the reign of Ajitapida, his chief minister, Utpala, carried away the revenue realisations collected by three departments of revenue and created another for the maintenance of the king.¹³⁹ Samkaravarman established two new revenue offices called Attapatibhaga and Grahakritya ('domestic affairs'). The collection of revenue from a variety of direct taxes was entrusted to the former and the latter was responsible for collection of revenue from deducting, or adding to the due weights, from fines and similar imposts.¹⁴⁰ They may also have possibly included fees at certain domestic events, such as marriages, Yagnopavita, etc.¹⁴¹ To assist the officer in charge of Grahakritya, had appointed five secretaries (divira) as also a treasurer (ganjavara). Chakravarman who on his restoration to the throne in 935 A.D. had to pay heavy bribes to his supporters. The Tantrin foot soldiers, resorted to heavy taxation through the officials of Aksapatala and Grahakritya, but the people having been reduced to the lowest depths of poverty could not pay these additional levies.¹⁴²

King Yasaskara appointed four city-prefects (*Nagaradhikara*) in order to increase his revenue by the contributions they had to offer by competition. The officials had, of course, to recoup themselves by increased exactions from the citizens.¹⁴³ The variety of taxes and fines that they used to collect can be estimated from the fact that they levied fines even "on house holder in the case of immoral conduct on the part of a married woman and on persons alleged to have had carnal intercourse with dancing girls who had been received into households as wedded wives."¹⁴⁴

With the increasing instability of administration during and after the tenth century AD, and the consequent impoverishment of the people, the revenue receipts naturally dwindled, and we find the kings and their zealous ministers instituting new and more unjust methods

of taxation. Under Abhimanyu (958-972 AD) when Didda was the regent, the officer-in-charge of the treasury named Sindhu, created new imposts and thus "became the founder of the revenue-office called after him *Sindhuganja*." ¹⁴⁵

The condition of the people was deplorable during the reign of Harsa. Given to extravagant expenditure on his court and personal enjoyment, and "upon various corps of his army", he stooped to all means of collecting funds to meet these expenses, "O shame!" writes Kalhana in indignation, "though he possessed his grandfather's and father's treasures and those which Utkarsa at the commencement of his reign had brought from Lohara, and though he had confiscated from the temples the riches bestowed by former kings, yet he endeavoured to secure more wealth by oppressing the house-holders." He levied new imposts through several 'prefects of property (*nayaka*) who "seized property of all sorts". All imaginable classes of trade and manufacture were taxed, so much so that he "appointed also a 'prefect for night soil' to raise revenue." ¹⁴⁶ The people who evaded payment were tormented by his officials who inflicted heavy fines "as if a boulder were thrown on an old bullock which has become worn out by dragging the plough." ¹⁴⁷

It seems that during the comparatively peaceful reign of Jayasimha, some of these imposts were abolished, but not before an outburst of popular anger. The Brahmins of Avantipur held a solemn fast against the policy of the powerful minister Chitaratha, who was increasing the imposts. But this made no impression on the obstinate minister. Finally, a Brahmin youth named Vijayaraja, Kalhana's contemporary, taking recourse to terrorist methods, attacked Chitaratha with a dagger and grievously injured him. "Vijayaraja disdained to flee although he could have done so, announced that he had stabbed the minister, and was killed bravely fighting against odds as an act of supreme sacrifice." ¹⁴⁸

There is no indication in the *Rajatarangini* of the amount of revenue collected by the kings of Kashmir from land and other sources. Considering the huge amounts spent by the kings and queens on dress and jewellery, and the magnificent temples and palaces erected by them, it seems to have been considerable. The army and the civil service were besides, a great drain on the revenues as also the several

expeditions against neighboring principalities. Often, the king of Kashmir had to pay subsidies to them.

We also learn from several passages in the Chronicles that some enlightened kings like Lalitaditya and Avantivarman undertook extensive irrigation projects. Suyya's expenditure on clearing the bed of the Jhelum at Baramula of rocks and silt, has already been indicated.¹⁴⁹ It seems that large amounts were also spent on the maintenance of roads and bridges.¹⁵⁰ Public bath-houses on the Jhelum in Srinagar were also built by the government.¹⁵¹ There is mention at several places of schools and hospitals as well as the public rest houses set up by the kings.¹⁵²

Large stipends and scholarships were paid to outstanding poets and authors, as also to artists, musicians and dancers. Udbhatta, Jayapida's Chief Pandit, was paid a sum of 100,000 *dinaras* as his daily allowance.¹⁵³ Similarly, heavy subsidies like those paid to Sahi princes who lived at the court of king Ananta, constituted a serious drain on the royal treasury.¹⁵⁴

Agricultural Production

With its fertile soil and abundance of water-supply, Kashmir has been from ancient times depending mainly on agriculture as the principal source of food and wealth. The Valley was dotted with numerous villages and, according to Kalhana, the villagers were wholly absorbed in agriculture.¹⁵⁵

The chief crop to the cultivation of which the agriculturists devoted their labour and time was rice. Its character as the main cereal is sufficiently emphasised by the fact that Kalhana refers to it by the simple term *ofdhanya*, 'grain' — a term by which paddy is known in Kashmir even at the present time. Cultivation of rice pre-supposes abundance of irrigations facilities, which exist in the Valley. The novel and elaborate contrivances by which water taken from rivers and streams is distributed over the rice-fields seem to have existed in one form or the other from ancient times. That there are definite indications of an elaborate system of irrigation having been present proves further the antiquity of rice cultivation in the Valley. It appears that all, available land on the hill sides, *karewas* and low-lying tracts by the marshes,

must have been under cultivation.

That there was a greater pressure on land in olden times due to the swelling population is attested to by "traces of old irrigation-cuts long ago abandoned which brought down the water of the melting snows from alpine plateaus high above the forest zone. Their distance from any lands capable of rice cultivation is so great, and the trouble of their construction must have been so considerable that only a far greater demand, for irrigation than the present one can account for their existence."¹⁵⁶

The fact that the destruction of rice crops always resulted in scarcity and famine shows that rice was the staple food of the people. According to Marco Polo (13th century AD), rice was the principal food of the people of Kashmir.¹⁵⁷ The seed was sown in the month of Chaitra (March)¹⁵⁸ and by the month of Bhadra (September) the fields were covered with ripened paddy.¹⁵⁹ The fields had to be properly ploughed up before sowing of seeds and oxen were employed for tillage.¹⁶⁰ Harvesting was done in the month of Asvina (October) after which the ceremony of new crops (*navana*) was performed.¹⁶¹ We have an interesting reference which closely resembles the modern practice among householders of drying their paddy in the sun before husking in the story of the Naga maiden who married a Brahmin youth and who was watching her paddy spread on the ground to dry.¹⁶²

Besides rice we have evidence of the cultivation of barley and pulses too. These crops, according to the *Nilamatpurana*, ripened in the month of Jyesta (June). The pulses consisted of several varieties such as gram (*chana*), lentil (*masur*) and blackgram (*mung*).

Fruit cultivation seems to have been practiced in Kashmir from ancient times. We have mention of grapes and grape-gardens in the *Rajatarangini*. Grapes "which were scarce even in heaven were common in Kashmir." The town of Martandaa for instance was "swelling with grapes" during Lalitaditya's time.¹⁶³ Bilhana when singing of the beauties of his homeland mentions grapes growing in abundance in the valley.¹⁶⁴ Apple (*palevata*) was also cultivated.¹⁶⁵ Heun Tsiang who visited Kashmir in the seventh century AD remarks that Kashmir 'produced abundant fruits and flowers'. Among the fruits grown were

the pear (*li*), the wild plum (*nai*), the peach (*t'au*), the apricot (*hang* or *mui*) and the grape (*po-tau*).¹⁶⁶

The cultivation of saffron has been a monopoly of Kashmir from ancient times. Known also as *Kashmiraja* it was, according to Kalhana, one of the five things for which Kashmir was famous, and the privilege of royalty to use it as a scented salve or emollient. Saffron was also used as an ingredient in Greek medicine and cuisine and it continues to be so used in Kashmir. In *The Nilamatpurana*, we often find references to *kumkum* (saffron) and Bilhana testifies to its growth in the Valley.¹⁶⁷ The legend about its origin connects it with the plateau of Padmapura (Pampore) where the first bulb was planted by the famous physician, Wagbhata, who received it as a gift from Naga Takshaka on his being cured of an eye disease. The elaborate method of its cultivation in well-prepared beds seems to have been followed from ancient times.

Kuth (*Saussurea Lappa*) which is an important forest product, though not cultivated as such, was also used in medicine and incense. So was *dhupa*, another forest by-product from which an incense was prepared for use in worship. Kalhana has several references to *dhupa*, which seems to have been an article of trade among the Brahmin priests in the temples of Kashmir.¹⁶⁸

Irrigation

In the earliest traditions recorded by Kalhana, the construction of irrigation canals plays a significant role. The Suvarnmankulya (modern Sunmankul) which is ascribed to king Suvarna and which still brings water to a great part of the Advin Pargana is great antiquity.¹⁶⁹ The reference to the aqueduct by which king Damodara is supposed to have attempted to bring water to the plateau named after him, though legendary in the main, is also characteristic.¹⁷⁰ Lalitaditya is credited with having supplied to villages near Chakradhara (modern Tsakadar) with irrigation facilities by the erection of water-wheels (*araghatta*) which lifted water from the Jhelum.¹⁷¹

We have already noticed the vast irrigation and flood protection works completed by Avantivarman's engineer-minister, Suyya (Chapter five). He is said to have "embellished all regions with an abundance of irrigated fields which were distinguished for excellent produce."

The increase in the produce of rice and other crops following these measures, and the reclamation of new land from river and marshes lowered the average price of rice from 200 to 36 *dinaras* per *Khari* (176 lbs).¹⁷²

Land Tenure

The immemorial tradition in Kashmir considered all land as the property of the ruler, and those who cultivated it as his tenants. This explains the innumerable grants of *agraharas* or *jagirs* to favorite officials and ministers by several kings and queens and the endowment of villages for the maintenance of temples and hospices.¹⁷³ This practice of granting *jagirs* is perhaps responsible for the growth of the Damara landlords who played an important role in the politics of Kashmir during the rule of the later Hindu kings. Land granted to these barons and also to temples was, it seems, tenanted by small cultivators who, after deducting the State's share of the produce had to surrender another share to the landlords or to the managers of religious endowments.

We can deduce this from a significant verse in the *Rajatarangini* where Kalhana mentions the resumption of the land grants to temples by Samkaravarman, on the understanding that a fixed amount should be returned in compensation from the revenue of these villages. The land of these villages was subsequently taken under direct fiscal arrangement, which made it easy to reduce the compensatory allotment. The practice of some tracts of land being directly farmed by the State continues till today.¹⁷⁴

A Damara's relations between the king on the one hand and the tenant on the other cannot be traced clearly from the Chronicles. Some of the Damaras are said to have obtained revenue from their land, apparently their tenants.¹⁷⁵ There is also no record of the conditions under which a tenant of the State held his land. It is doubtful that he ever owned land as such, but probably he could transfer his rights to another on payment of cash. In the cities, we have definite evidence to prove, property was owned by the citizens who could sell or purchase it. King Yasaskara while deciding the property case of a Brahmin had to examine the sale-deed of a house wherein

he discovered a fraudulent interpolation by the Registrar of real estate sale deeds.¹⁷⁶ The office of Aksapatala comprised also the Record Office or archives where all documents pertaining to transfer of property were recorded by a special officer (*Pattopadhyaya*).¹⁷⁷

Industries and Professions

Though agriculture formed the main occupation of the inhabitants of the Valley, it appears there were several industries, which gave employment to a fair proportion of the population. The most notable of these were the manufacture of textiles, leather goods, and jewellery. There were also sculptors, woodworkers and potters. Both woolen and cotton textiles were produced in ancient Kashmir. Apart from the depiction of finely-clad figures on the terracotta tiles unearthed at Harwan, there is the direct evidence of Heun Tsiang who records that the people of Kashmir wore clothes of white linen. "Their garments are made of Kaiu-She-Ye (Kansheya) and of cotton.

Kaiu-She Ye is the product of the wild silk worm. They have garments also of Ts'o-mo (Kshaumo) which is a sort of hemp; garments also made of Kien-po-lo (Kambala) which is woven from fine goat hair; garments also made from Ho-la-li (Karala)—this stuff is made from the fine hair of wild animals; it is seldom this can be woven, and therefore the stuff is very valuable and it is regarded as fine-clothing.¹⁷⁸

Thus we find the existence of a kind of silk industry in Kashmir in ancient times. In the Sabha Parva of the *Mahabharata* mention is made of a "thread spun by worms among the many presents offered to Yudhisthira by a feudatory prince from the north-western side of the Himalayas, presumably Kashmir. We find an echo of its antiquity in Mirza Haider Dughlat's *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* (1540 AD) wherein he records, that "among the wonders of Kashmir are the number of mulberry trees cultivated for their leaves for the production of silk."

The Ho-la-li (Karala) of Heun Tsiang definitely refers to pashmina or cloth made out of fine wool (*pashm*) of the shawl goat. The history of this industry goes to remote antiquity. When the Kashmiris took to it is not known, but a mention of shawls is made in the *mahabharata*. Besides shawls, several kinds of blankets were also manufactured. Kshemendra's *Narmamala* and *Samayamatrika* have several references

to these blankets. The chief centre of woollen manufacture was Pattan which had also a market for the sale of sheep and cattle.¹⁷⁹

Smithery, of course, exists in Kashmir from ancient times. With agriculture as the main occupation of the people and with a large standing army of the kings always eager to launch conquering expeditions out of the Valley, there must have been a roaring business for the blacksmith. Besides, cooking vessels and other utensils were made of brass and copper. Ancient images in brass and copper of gods and goddesses have been discovered during excavations and this also pre supposes the existence of a highly advanced industry of casting and moulding metals.

Closely associated with the metal industry was that of pottery. Excavations carried out at Burzahom by De Terra and his party has revealed a large quantity of earthenware. While the lower culture yielded a type of highly polished blackware and potsherds with incised geometric designs assignable to a period ranging from 3000 to 1800 B.C., the upper culture layer was found to contain potsherds belonging to the same Buddhist period as Harwan, which represents the fourth century AD. At Avantipura a large number of huge jars for storing grain and other vessels have been recovered. Similarly we have the fine specimens of Gandhara art in terracotta heads discovered at Ushkur in the Valley and Akhnur in Jammu. We have mention by Kshemendra of earthen rings worn by women of Kashmir as also a reference by Kalhana to a potter-woman. This indicates the existence of a highly developed and flourishing industry.

It seems Kashmir was also fairly advanced in glass manufacture, particularly bangles. In the *Rajatarangini* it is stated that the merchant Padmaraja regularly dispatched to king Bhoja of Malwa, the water of Papasudana *tirlha* filled in large glass jars. A quantity of ancient glass fragments was found strewn on the road leading to the spring of Papasudana from the village of Kother.

Goldsmiths must have of course, flourished in ancient Kashmir. Considering the numerous references in the *Rajatarangini* to gold, bangles, armlets, rings and other ornaments worn by kings, queens and nobles, the goldsmith must have always had a busy time, particularly when the fashions in these changed from time to time.

Similarly the presence of numerous ruins of old temples with exquisite sculpture, fluted columns and trefoil arches, leaves no doubt to the existence in ancient Kashmir of a large number of masons and sculptors. Most of the temple buildings were no doubt in stone, but the cities and towns were, as now, built in timber. The mention of several devastating fires, which burnt Srinagar and other towns to ashes, clearly indicates the use of timber in building. Naturally the carpenter and woodworker had a flourishing trade. Building of boats, palanquins and manufacture of household furniture were also some of the items for which the services of a carpenter were in demand.

Besides these, there must have flourished other minor industries too. There are references to gardeners, fishermen, garland-makers, barbers, teachers, and *Vaidyas* or physicians. There were copper and iron mines, which must have given employment to a good number of workers.¹⁸⁰

Trade and Commerce

Ancient Kashmir had, as we have already noted, far Hung political and cultural contacts with distant corners of India, with Centra Asia and Tibet and with China. Under Asoka and later Kaniska, Kashmir became part of vast empires and being geographically situated at a central and strategic position in Asia, it became the meeting place of caravans from the plains of India and from distant cities in Central Asia

Besides this enter pot trade, Kashmir also exported its own *products* particularly woollen goods, saffron and Kuth (costus) and small quantities of silk. The demand for the Kashmirian saffron in Indian market was very great in ancient times. In Harsa's *Ratnavali* we have a reference to saffron of Kashmir being preferred to the saffron grown in the country of the Parasikas and Bahlikas. Heun Tsiang noticed woolens being worn by the inhabitants of the northern regions of India. Kashmir being a centre of woollen manufacture must have had a brisk export trade in this commodity. As the wool for the manufacture of shawls comes from the highland of Tibet, the trade with that country has therefore an ancient origin. The shawl is made of very fine, soft, short, flossy under wool called *keli phumb* or wool of kel

(shawl goat), a variety of *caprahircus*, inhabiting the elevated regions of Tibet. These regions, owing to their high altitude, are intensely cold and nature has clothed the goats with this warm wool. The higher the goats live, the finer and warmer is their wool. The finest wool comes from the markets of Turfan, the collection centre of wool from the goats of Tien Shen mountains. The wool traders exchanged their raw wool for manufactured shawl goods and sold them advantageously in various markets of Central Asia, wherefrom they were carried to famous cities of Asia and Europe.¹⁸¹

That wool was one of the essential commodities of trade in Kashmir is evident from a passage in the *Rajatarangini* where Kalhana quoting the high prices of goods during the famine under Harsa, mentions besides that of rice, the staple food of Kashmiris, the price of wool.¹⁸² Thus whereas raw *pashm* or shawl wool formed an important item of import, the manufactured woollen goods were the principal articles of export.¹⁸³

On account of difficulty of transport, fruits do not seem to have been exported though we may assume grapes to have been sent out of the Valley to markets in northern India. We have an echo of this in the *Ain-i-Akbari* where Abul Fazal mentions that "Kashmirians bring grapes on their backs in long baskets."¹⁸⁴ It is but natural that this fruit must have been in great demand, either fresh or in dried form.

Among other articles of import were salt¹⁸⁵ spices¹⁸⁶ and cotton and silk piece goods from the rest of India.¹⁸⁷ Besides, we can safely assume the import of precious metals and copper and brass for coinage, etc. Marco Polo mentions that coral which was carried from the western parts of the world, had a better sale in Kashmir.¹⁸⁸

Internal trade in the Valley was confined to food grains, cattle, agricultural implements, earthenware and metallic vessels, and minor agricultural and industrial products. That Kashmiris of ancient times had well developed commercial sense is amply proved by references in the *Rajatarangini* to markets (*hatta*) in different cities of Kashmir.¹⁸⁹ The principal centres of trade in the Valley were the cities of Puranadisthana, Huskapura, Pravarapura, Parihaspura, etc.

Most of the internal trade in the Valley was carried by the river Jhelum and its tributaries. That from ancient times the boats were the

principal means of transport and travel is shown by the frequent references to river journeys, boats and boat bridges and *ghats* or landing places in the Chronicle of Kalhana.¹⁹⁰ A striking passage in the *Rajatarangini* brings it out clearly. When king Kalasa, who was staying at Vijayeswara wished to pass his last days at the temple of Martand he "was carried by the water-route in boats, along with his ministers and seraglio" from there to the nearest ghat or landing place of Martand, presumably modern Khanabal.¹⁹¹

The import and export trade of the Valley was carried by the various routes leading to the rest of India and Central Asia, Tibet and China. The frontier watch-stations (*dranga*) on the mountain passes over which most of the trade routes passed, also served as customs posts (*Sulkasthana*) where officials known as *Saulkikas* realised duties on goods imported into or exported from the Valley. This is borne out by a dramatic passage in the *Rajatarangini*. Kotesvara, a Damara lord in order to realise the ransom promised by the Chief of Lohara for handing over his opponent, Lothana, took a drastic step. "Imprisoning the officials he collected the customs at the watch station (*dranga*) and had his own name stamped in red-lead on the wares, as if he were the king."¹⁹²

That trade with the rest of India was highly remunerative is proved by several references in the Chronicle to rich merchants come to Kashmir from India. During the reign of Pratapaditya II, for instance, "the land was full of merchants of different wares come from all regions."¹⁹³ Some of them had houses as rich in decoration and luxury as the palace of the king. During the reign of Ananta, a merchant from India was entrusted by king Bhoja of Malwa to build a wall round the spring at Kapateswara and also to send its holy water to him every day in glass jars. He also supplied betel leaves to king Ananta and by trading in different commodities became so rich that when Ananta was in financial trouble he "became the king's creditor and took from him a diadem which was adorned with five resplendent crescents and the throne, as a security for money which was due to him."¹⁹⁴ Similarly a clever merchant, Jayyaka by name, "by selling victuals as a trader to far off regions, accumulated wealth, and became in course of time a rival to the lord of wealth (Kubera)."¹⁹⁵

But generally the merchant class, and more particularly those carrying on petty trade and banking, seem to have become unpopular through their fraudulent transactions. This is accountable only by the decline in foreign trade during the later period of Hindu rule, when the trading class had very limited field for its activity.

Currency and Weights

In the numerous passages of the *Rajatarangini*, the later Chronicles of Jonaraja and Srivara, and in the *Lokaprakasa* of Kshemendra, we find references to the term *dinara* while stating the prices of commodities, amounts of salaries and the like.¹⁹⁶ It no doubt denotes the currency of the kingdom from ancient times. This word is well known to Sanskrit lexicography as the designation of a gold-coin. But in ancient Kashmir *dinara* appears to have been a mere abstract unit of account.

A comparison of tables of prices given by Abul Fazal and of the tradition surviving till recent times in Kashmir, with the data of the *Rajatarangini* and the later texts, clearly shows that the currency of Kashmir, at least from the ninth century onwards, was based on a decimal system of values starting from a very small unit. The values which can be shown to have been actually used in reckoning are given in Table 1 with their Sanskrit and modern designations:

Table1

12 Dinaras	=	1 Dvadasa ("Twelver"), <i>Bahagni</i>
2 Dvadasa	=	25 Dinaras or 1 Panchivimsatika, ("Twenty-Fiver") <i>Puntsu</i> .
4 Panchivimsatika	=	100dinaras or 1 Sata ("Hundreder"), <i>Hath</i> .
10 Satas	=	1,000 dinaras or 1 Sahasra ("Thousander") <i>Sasun</i> .
100 Sahasra	=	1,00,000 dinaras or 1 Laksa, <i>Lachh</i> .
100 Laksa	=	1,00,00,000 Dinaras or 1 Koti, <i>Cröre</i> . ¹⁹⁹

The Table 2 shows the coins which can be assumed to have

Table 2

Value in Dinaras	Designation	Early Hindu Coins (up to AD 855)	Later Hindu Coins (from AD 855 onwards)	Muhamadan coins	Equivalent Vautes on Abul Fazal's estimate
1	Dvadasa (Bahagru)	...	AE 45 grs.	...	1/8 Dam or 1/320 Rupee
25	Panchivi msatika (Puntsu)	...	AE 91 grs.	...	1/4 Dam or 1/160 Rupee
100	Sata (Hath)	...	...	...	1 Dam or 1/40 Rupee
500	...	...	AR 23.5 grs.	...	5 Dams or 1/8 Rupee
1,000	Sahasra (sasun)	...	...	...	10 Dams or 1/4 Rupee
2,500	...	AR 120 grs.	...	...	25 Rupees
12,500	Laksa (Lachh)	...	AV 73 grs.	...	125 Dams or 25/8 rupees
100,000	Koti	...	...	...	25 Rupees
10,000,000	(Crore)	...	...	...	2,500 Rupees

represented monetary values of the above description at successive periods together with their metal and weight. The equivalent values for Akbar's time, calculated on Abul fazals estimate, are shown in a separate column.

The table shows that the only denomination of coins which can be traced throughout, is the copper coin representing 25 dinaras. Taking into consideration also the vast preponderance of these coins in quantity, the old currency of Kashmir must be described as one in copper.

But if the *dinara* was more than a mere abstract unit of accounts it could not well have been represented by any other token than the *cowree*. For the weight of copper which would correspond to the twenty-fifth part of a Panchavimsatika viz $91/25$ or 3.54 grs is manifestly too small for a real coin. No copper pieces of this diminutive size have been ever found in Kashmir.

That the *cowree* was from early times used as a monetary token in Kashmir as elsewhere in India, is amply shown by Kalhana's work. He names in a characteristic fashion the lowest and highest monetary values when he speaks of king Samgramadeya who, starting with a *cowree* (varataka) had amassed crores. Similarly Kshemendra humorously describes the miserly trader, who in the evening after fleecing his customers, is with difficulty induced to give three *cowrees* to his household.

What was the value of a *cowree* in terms of *dinara* currency in ancient times is difficult to find out from the scanty material we have at our disposal, but from the popular reckoning in Kashmir surviving till the beginning of the present century, *Bahagni* was equal to eight *cowrees* and the *Puntsu* to 16.

Besides the *cowree* and the copper coins of *Puntsu*, etc, we find in ancient Kashmir another medium of exchange, namely rice. Considering the paramount importance which this grain, the staple produce of the Valley, has at all times possessed for the material condition of its inhabitants, it is only natural that it should have played its part as a subsidiary currency in Kashmir. By far the greatest portion of the land revenue being assessed and collected in *kharis* (modern *kharwar*) of grain, it necessarily follows that government payments were made in

grain, giving it the sanctity and stamp of regular currency.¹⁹⁷

It should not, however, be presumed from the above that there was no metallic currency in circulation in ancient Kashmir. Many coins of the Indo-Greek and Scythian rulers have been recovered from the state.¹⁹⁸ During the Kushan period we find a bi-metallic currency of gold and copper in use. As Kashmir came in contact with flourishing trade centres of India and Central Asia there must have poured into the Valley enough gold to enable its rulers to strike gold coins in abundance. This metal naturally facilitated trade with foreign countries, as gold has from time immemorial been the medium of international exchange. This bi-metallic currency continued to be minted during the reign of the Kidara Kushan, though it was inferior in metal and type. A ready explanation for this debased currency is the instability and tyranny of the Hun king Mihirakula and his successors, which cut off the trade routes in northern India, thus directly affecting the normal flow of trade.

No wonder that the later Hun rulers like Toramana issued a prolific coinage in copper instead of gold and this continued perhaps till the beginning of the Karkota rule. Even though Kashmir attained great prosperity under them, we find only an electrum coinage of mixed metal, which contained gold, silver and copper in different proportions. A large number of these coins have been found at as distant places as Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, showing the brisk trade going on between Kashmir and the rest of India during this period.

There was again a debasement in currency during the reigns of later Karkota kings, no doubt due to the instable political conditions prevailing in the kingdom. But when under Avantivarman, Kashmir witnessed an era of consolidation and peace, we find again the mixed gold coins in circulation. Later, excepting under Harsa when in the beginning of his reign he struck gold coins, we find the Kashmir kings of the Lohara dynasty reverting to copper coinage. It appears from a critical study of *Rajatarangini* that the kings, the Damaras, rich merchants and nobility were engaged in amassing bullion in the form of ingots and heavy ornaments. King Yasaskara carried with him 2,500 gold pieces when he went to pass his last days in the temple of Vijyeswara. Kshemagupta, popularly known as Kankanavarsa (bestower

of armlets), and other king, and queens had rich treasures of gold in ingot and ornaments. Sussala is recorded to have transmitted gold ingots to his treasury in the Lohara castle. The only popular form of investment was the acquisition of ornaments in gold or silver and the king had the royal privilege of "marking the gold according to colour (quality), price, etc which served to bring to light the savings of the people."¹⁹⁹ But all through this period there is no evidence of gold coinage, copper coins alone being in circulation.

Apart from political instability, the main reason for withdrawal of gold from circulation was the complete breakdown of trade and commerce with the rest of India following the policy of isolation adopted by the kings of later Hindu period. Bullion ceased to enter the Valley and since there was no need of the precious metals for settling transactions with outside traders the remaining few gold coins also seem to have gone out of circulation.

The measure of weight in Kashmir has been the *khari* from time immemorial. We have reference to it in several passages of the *Rajatarangini*, Kshemendra's *Lokaprakasa* and Abul Fazal's *Ain-i-Akbari*. This ancient measure is mentioned in a hymn of the Rig-Veda (iv-32,17) and was known to Panini. It is called *khar* in Kashmiri and *kharwar* (for *khar-bar*, ass-load) in Persian.

The division and weight of the *khari* does not appear to have changed from ancient times. According to Abul Fazl and Moorcraft (*Travels*, ii p. 135) a *khari* is equal to 1,960 Palas. Taking the latter measure as equivalent to $3\frac{5}{6}$ tolas, the *khari* corresponds to $177\frac{129}{175}$ Ibs. Table 3 gives the equivalent weights of the *khari* and its subdivisions:

Table 3

3 $\frac{3}{4}$ tolas	= 1 Pala		
30 Palas	= 108 Tolas	= 1 Manut	= $2\frac{136}{175}$ Ibs.
2 Manut	= 60 Palas	= 1 Panzu	
2 Panzu	= 120"	= 1 Trak	
16 Trak	= 1920"	= 1 Khari	= $177\frac{129}{175}$ Ibs.

Land measures were calculated not by length and breadth, but by the amount of seed required by certain areas for the rice

cultivation. A *khari* of land — that is the rice area which is supposed to require a *khari's* weight of rice seed — exactly corresponds to four British acres.

Floods and Famines

It has already been mentioned (Chapter one) that the configuration of the Valley makes it liable to floods and naturally we find accounts of several devastating floods having caused immense damage to the crops in ancient Kashmir.

Kalhana mentions the drainage operations undertaken by Lalitaditya which reclaimed large tracts of swampy land and made them fit for cultivation. We have references to flood protection measures in the building of stone dykes and embankments.

A detailed and authentic account of famines caused by floods is given by Kalhana while describing the elaborated flood protection measures undertaken by king Avantivarman under the direction of his engineer-minister, Suyya. It is mentioned that a *khari* of rice of which the normal price was 203 *dinaras* could not be had for less than 1050 *dinaras*. A harrowing account of a devastating flood which resulted in a severe famine is given while narrating the events of the rule of king Partha. In the year 917-18 AD, the "whole autumn rice crop was destroyed by a flood." Under Harsa, a flood devastated the Valley in the year 1099 AD, resulting in "an extreme scarcity of all wares." During the reign of Jayasimha the "land was deluged by a flood poured forth by the clouds of the rainy season, and land and water became level. The earth became like a drinking cup filled with water instead of spirit, the trees on it immersed so that only their tops were visible."

The inevitable consequence of a flood was a severe famine. But there was another cause too of the latter calamity seizing the people of Kashmir off and on. An early fall of snow would destroy the ripe autumn crop, as for instance during the time of Tunjina I, when snow fell as early as September destroying the rice crop, the staple food of the people. It is said that a divine intercession following the prayers of the queen saved the famine-stricken people from total annihilation.

We have already noticed the occurrence of famines during and before the rule of Avantivarman and his measures to prevent floods, their primary cause; and also increase the area of land for cultivation. But during the rule of Partha the floods were so severe that they carried away the last grain of ripened paddy, resulting in a severe famine. Kalhana gives a pathetic picture of the people who were struck by this awful calamity:

“One could scarcely see the water in the Vitasta, entirely covered as the river was with corpses soaked and swollen by the water in which they had long been lying. The land became densely covered with bones in all directions, until it was like one great burial-ground, causing terror to all beings.”

Following the floods in the year 1099 AD, there was a severe famine in Kashmir, when “a *khari* of rice was bought for 500 *dinaras*, and two *palas* of grape-juice cost one *dinara*. *Apala* of wool was sold at six *dinaras*; of salt, pepper, asafoetida and other articles it was difficult even to hear the name.” There was a fearful loss of life and “the water of the streams was covered with the dead.”

Man was also responsible for a severe famine in the Valley during the reign of Sussala, when the forces of the Damaras under the command of the pretender Bhiksacara besieged the city of Srinagar and set fire to its food stores which had been brought into the city in lieu of land revenue. Even “the nobles who received no money from the royal household while the king was in distress, perished also quickly, in that famine.”²⁰⁰

Standard of Life

But it was not always in distress that the people of Kashmir passed their days. We have ample evidence furnished by the *Rajatarangini* and other old texts to show that the people of ancient Kashmir were of refined taste and led quite a comfortable life with good food, drink, clothes and ornaments and spacious houses.

Rice was, as now, the staple food of Kashmiris in ancient times. As mentioned earlier, *dhanya* (grain) denotes rice and a scarcity of this commodity invariably resulted in famine. We have in Kshemendra's *Narmamala* references to various preparations in rice, for example,

boiled-rice, rice mixed with sugar and sugarcane juice, cakes of rice and dried ricemeal.

Barley seems to have formed the food of the poorer classes and mainly of agriculturists who bore the brunt of heavy taxation. Pulses too were an important item of food. We have mention of *chana* (gram) and lentil. A special preparation from ground *mung* was the *papara* or cake.

Vegetables seem to have been assiduously cultivated. We have mention of *aramika* or vegetable cultivator in the *Rajatarangini* and also irrigation and manuring of vegetable gardens. Vegetables growing wild in the forests and meadows like *kachidani* and *upal-hak* also seem to have been consumed by poorer classes.²⁰¹ Mutton, however, was freely eaten. We have mention in the *Rajatarangini* of "fried meat" being taken by people. The flesh of the fowl and the *ram kukuta* and *mesa* and perhaps also of the goat was eaten.²⁰² Game birds and fish were freely consumed. Marco Polo informs us that the food, of the people of Kashmir was flesh with rice and other grains.²⁰³

Fruit, of which there was an abundance, formed an important article of diet. Heun Tsiang mentions pear, the wild plum, the peach, the apricot and the grape as being cultivated in profusion in Kashmir.²⁰⁴ Grapes were particularly valued as fruit and were also used in brewing wine. Drinking of wine seems to have been quite popular. Kalhana's Chronicle is full of references to people, men and women, who were addicted to drink. Far from being prohibited, wine seems to have been recommended specially on ceremonial occasions.²⁰⁵ The wine, cooled and perfumed with flowers, was appreciated as a delicious drink.²⁰⁶

Milk undoubtedly comprised one of the principal items of diet. Cows were kept by ordinary householders. Various preparation of milk like *ghee*, butter, and curds (*dahi*) were known.²⁰⁷ Honey and sugar were used to sweet the milk and other foods.²⁰⁸ Among the spices used may be mentioned black-pepper, ginger and asafoetida. The chewing of betel leaf seems to have been a popular luxury among the rich. The king and his courtiers were ever found to be chewing the betel-leaf, which owing to prohibitive cost of transport from Central India was a mark of affluence and aristocracy.²⁰⁹

Dress and Ornaments

In the seventh century AD, Heun Tsiang gives the following description of the dress of North India "where the air is cold": "The men wind their garments round their middle, then gather under the armpits, and let them fall down across the body, hanging to the right. The robes of the women fall down to the ground; they completely cover their shoulders. On their heads the people wore caps, with flower-wreaths and jeweled necklets."²¹⁰

From the specimens of Graeco-Gandharan sculpture unearthed at Ushkur and Akhnur, can be had an idea of the dress worn by people during and after the Kusan rule. A fine silk or cotton garment hemmed in at the middle and falling loose to the ankles was the common dress of men and women. This further corroborated by the figure depicted on terracotta tiles of the fourth century AD found at Harwan. One of the tiles has the figure of a woman carrying a flower vase, who wears a transparent robe, a kind of close fitting turban and large earrings. Another tile shows a female-dancer wearing loose robes and trousers while a third one has a figure of a female musician dressed in puffed-up trousers. Some of the male figures are dressed in loose fitting trousers and Turkman caps. All this shows a marked influence of Central Asian dress, which seems to have become the fashion after the first century AD.²¹¹

But with the growth of influence from the plains of India during the Karkota rule, we find from the *Rajatarangini* the advent of a snort jacket or blouse with half sleeves and a long lower garment, the tail end of which touched the ground. A long robe hanging down the shoulders to the knees, tied up at the waist with a girdle or belt-formed the dress of menfolk. The climate of the Valley being cold, the people wore woollen garments with thick blankets in the case of poorer, and warm fine blankets in the case of rich urban classes, over the shoulders. To keep themselves warm they used the Karigri (*Kasthangarika*), firepot, under their garments. We find white turbans worn by the people during the rule of later Hindu kings. Leather shoes were generally worn by men, while rich women had the fashionable "peacock shoes." Wooden sandals were common.

The eternal fondness of women to adorn themselves with ornaments

found expression in ancient Kashmir also. Kalhana mentions necklaces, wristlets, armlets bracelets and ear-rings being the favourite ornaments of women.²¹² A special type of armlet called *Valaya Kalapi* and earring called *Kanaka-nadi* have been referred to in Damodargupta's *Kuttanimata Kavya*. An armlet with the face of a peacock (*Valaya Kalapi*), a palm-shaped small ear-drop (*Kanaka-nadi*) seem to have been much in vogue. King Harsa introduced new fashions in dress and ornaments among his courtiers and queens. These included the Ketaka-leafed tiaras (*Svarna-ketakatranka*), pendants on fore-head (*Tilaka*) and golden strings at the end of locks.

Nor were the ladies backward in toilet and make-up. They used camphor, sandal and saffron as emollient and perfume.²¹³ They reddened the feet and lips with lac and applied collyrium to the eyes. Fashions in hairdressing seem to have been changing from time to time. *Coiffures* were decorated with flowers and gold thread.

We have a striking picture of the ornaments worn by women during the Kusan and later periods from a study of the terracotta figures, found at Ushkur and other places in the kingdom. On a fragment of statuary we find an arm with a beaded armlet which seems to have been connected by a similar band with the necklace. Another forearm has a bangle round the wrist. Another fragment of a left-hand has a finger ring. A figure of Avalokiteswar from Pandrenthan shows a three-peaked diadem, and elaborately jewelled girdle. On a Visnu image found at Avantipura we find a crown with a three-peaked diadem. Kalhana mentions that king Ananta crown had a "diadem adorned with five resplendent crescents."²¹⁴

Houses

A critical study of the *Rajatarangini* shows the Kashmir of ancient times as full of villages and towns. From the large number of towns, villages and cities founded by kings, queens and courtiers, it appears that the kingdom was densely populated. Being a cold place, it can be easily surmised that all had a roof to live under. Whereas the kings and their courtiers had their palatial houses to live in, the masses had timber houses and huts. Even the mendicants had their own houses. A large number of *viharas*, temples, hospices and *mathas* provided

shelter to the poor in society. Foreign students lived in hostels specially built for them.

From the excavations conducted recently at Burzahom, we learn that the earliest inhabitants lived in pits, covered with roof of grass. But in later periods we have literary evidence of well-planned and well-laid-out towns and cities. Srinagar, originally founded By Pravarasena II, was, for instance, "provided with regularly arranged markets' and was full of "mansions which reach to the clouds. In fact one of the five characteristics of Kashmir's renown was its "lofty houses." The houses of the rich were built in quadrangles (*chatushala*) with large compounds in the middle. There were, as one of the tiles at Harwan depicts, balconies and verandas, and sloping roofs with lofts. Urban houses were definitely better than those built in the villages. The latter had courtyards surrounded by a wall and there was invariably a small garden of vegetables and fruit trees attached to it. The hut had a mud floor and the rooms were "full of mosquitoes where the seat was a place strewn with grass."

Timber being available freely in the Valley, the houses were mainly built of it. Frequency of earthquakes was also responsible for general use of timber in construction. This exposed the cities and towns to the danger of fires. We have mention of several devastating fires in the *Rajatarangini*, which clearly indicates the abundant use of timber in the construction of dwelling houses in Kashmir.

Fairs and Festivals

The people celebrated a number of festivals, chief among which was the *Shivratri*. Held on the 13th day of the dark fortnight of Phalguna (Feb-March), the festivities connected with it extended to several days. The king observed the festival with great eclat and "flooded his people with presents, just as Indra floods the earth with rain at the conjunction of planets." Feasts were held and dancing and singing performances given by the court artists. Poetic symposia at which outstanding compositions of poets were applauded and their authors suitably rewarded, were a regular feature.

Another important festival, still known in Kashmir, was the *Indradvasi*, held on the 12th day of the bright half of Bhadra

(September), which was the day of pilgrimage to the sacred sites of the Varahaksetra at Baramula. This was naturally a festival of universal rejoicings, coincide as it did with the ripening and harvesting of the rice crop. It was an ancient festival and combined with the Nagayatra held on the fourth of the same fortnight, was also a very popular one. A detailed account of its celebrations is given by Srivara in his life of Zain-ul-abidin, who himself used to take part in the festivities.

An old and popular festival deriving its origin from the ancient tradition of people leaving the Valley in winter and coming back on the advent of Summer, was that of Asvayuji held on 15th day of Asvina. Elaborate customs prescribed for this festival are given in the Nilamatpurana, 391, sqq. People had to amuse themselves by throwing mud at each other, by indulging in abuse and playing jokes in order to frighten away the Pisacha who were supposed to attempt to enter the homes of men on the day. This custom, now entirely forgotten, is comparable to the modern Holi festival and is often mentioned by Kalhana. People enjoyed this day by witnessing jugglers' performances, horse-play and exhibition of feats of strength. The festival is also referred to by Alberuni.

Apart from these special festivals there were many more traditional ones, like the New year's day in Chaitra, and the pilgrimages to several tirthas in the Valley. Alberuni mentions that Kashmiris celebrated Lalitaditya's victory over the Tibetans every year on the second of Chaitra.

The common people had also other means of amusing themselves. Strolling musicians and players, theatrical and dancing performances in the temples as well as horse-play, jugglers' shows are often mentioned in the Rajatarangini. A passage in the Chronicle tends to show that the common people witnessed theatrical performances under the open sky. When caught by a downpour, they would disperse pell-mell in all directions. A tile from Harwan represents a female musician playing on a drum and another depicts a *danseuse* in a dancing posture. We have mention of music and dancing in the *Nilamatputana* too. The kings were great lovers of dancing and music. King Harsa, for instance, was not only a lover of music and dancing, but an adept at these arts

too. He composed songs and set them to music. He personally taught dancing girls and actors and gave music lessons to pupils. Bharata's *Natyasastra* was commented upon by Kashmirian authors and there is evidence to show that dancing as an art was assiduously cultivated by the women of rich families. There were luxurious theatrical halls fitted with leather-cushioned seats and the palace and the temple had a *natyamandhapa*, a dancing and theatrical hall, as essential part of their architecture.

And for the poorer classes there were folk songs, folk-dramas and music. Modern chhakri the popular music played to the accompaniment of brass and earthen vessels, seems to have an ancient origin. At marriage feasts, sacrifices and other festivities the folk musicians were in great demand.

Pilgrimages to holy places in India undertaken by religious minded people were a regular feature of life in ancient days. We have a record in the *Rajatarangini* where it is mentioned that Kashmiris were freed from pilgrims tax at Gaya by the munificence of Enmantaka, a resident of Parihaspura, as also by Kandarpa the commander-in-chief of king Harsa. Similarly pilgrims and students from other parts of India visited Kashmir and we have mention of several kings and queens building hostels for their residence.

The conveyance of early Kashmir was mainly the horse. Kashmir had a fine breed of horses as there are numerous references to swift steeds, to prancing horses and to mounted troops (*asvavara*).

It has already been mentioned that because of the alpine nature of the kingdom, and the consequent difficulty in making and maintaining roads, there were no wheeled carriages in Kashmir till as late as the last quarter of the 19th century, carriage of goods and passengers in the Valley was mainly done by boats, of which there are several references in the *Rajatarangini*.

And for the carriage of the rich and nobility there was the famous litter. Alberuni remarks that the "noble among them (Kashmiris) ride in palanquins called *Katt* carried on the shoulders of men." Kalhana depicts the litter-carriers as belonging to an inferior class of labourers.

To cater to the needs of the infirm, aged and the sick there were numerous charitable institutions like *mathas*, hospices and hospitals.

There is a record of a hospital having been built by king Ranaditya.²⁴⁶ A hospice for the convenience of travellers was founded by vakpusta, and another by king Baladitya on the Pir Panjal pass. Queen Isanadevi the wife of Lalitaditya, constructed several wells, "the water of which was pure as nectar", for the poor and thirsty.

The standard of life of the people of ancient Kashmir seems to have been fairly high and in no way inferior to people living in the rest of India. For, it is only in congenial social and economic environments that the arts of peace can flourish. And the fact that ancient Kashmir made outstanding contributions to literature, philosophy, art and architecture of India proves that the people had more spacious times to live in.

CHAPTER:5

Art and Culture

"The beautiful greece," observes Younghusband, "with its purple hills and varied contour, its dancing seas and clear blue sky, produced the graceful Greeks. But Kashmir is more beautiful than Greece. It has the same blue sky and brilliant sunshine, but its purple hills are on a far grander scale, and if it has no sea, it has lake and river, and the still more impressive snowy mountains. It has, too, greater variety of natural scenery, of field and forest, of rugged mountain and open valley. And to me who have seen both countries, Kashmir seems much the more likely to impress a race by its natural beauty. Has it ever made any such impression? Are there no remains of buildings, roads, aqueducts, canals, statues, or any such mark by which a people leaves its impress on a country? And is there any literature or history?"

Certainly there are the ruins of temples and buildings all over the Valley, remarkable for their Egyptian solidity, simplicity and durability, as well as for what Cunningham describes their graceful elegance, the massive boldness of their parts, and the happy propriety of their outlines. And Kashmir has the unique distinction of possessing an unbroken historical record from ancient times to the present day. In the field of literature and philosophy it stands second to none in the rest of India, for, in the words of the Chronicler, learning, lofty houses, saffron, grapes and icy water—things which are difficult to get in heaven, are common here.'

Home of Sanskrit Learning

In ancient times Kashmir was the 'high school' of Sanskrit learning and scholars from all parts of India came to the Valley to study at the feet of great teachers and savants. "For upward of two thousand years," declares Grierson, "Kashmir has been the home of Sanskrit learning and from this small Valley have issued masterpieces of history, poetry, romance, fable and philosophy. Kashmiris are proud and justly proud of the literary glories of their land. For centuries it (Kashmir) was the home of the greatest Sanskrit scholars and at least one great Indian religion, Saivism, has found some of its most eloquent teachers on the banks of the Vitasta. Some of the greatest Sanskrit poets were born and wrote in the Valley, and from it has issued in the Sanskrit language a world-famous collection of folk-lore."²¹⁵

How and when Kashmir became a centre of Sanskrit language and learning is an interesting study in itself. According to one theory the eastern part of Iran was the region where the Aryans lived as long as they formed one people. The Indo-Aryans after their arrival in Afghanistan migrated in due course to the Punjab and the Gangetic Plains. We have already noted the immigration of Indo-Aryans from the Punjab into the Valley, and with the suppression of the earlier immigrants from the north by the more civilized indo-Aryans, Sanskrit became the language of religion and polite literature, until in the words of Bilhana "even women in Kashmir spoke Sanskrit and Prakrit quite fluently."

In the age of Asoka when Buddhism was carried to the Valley, the texts and literature of the new religion were written in Sanskrit, in contrast to those written in Pali in the rest of India. With the development of Mahayana the entire Buddhistic literature was composed in the Sanskrit language and it was perhaps because of this that Sanskrit was diffused in Central Asia by the numerous Buddhist missionaries from Kashmir. We have already noted the great part played in this movement by Kumarajiva and his band of Kashmiri Buddhist scholars and as a result of this activity Kucha became a centre of Sanskrit learning in Central Asia. In recent years a large number of Sanskrit manuscripts written on birch-bark have been discovered in the vast region of the Central Asian uplands and the

only lot of Sanskrit Buddhist manuscripts ever discovered in India has come from Gilgit in Kashmir.

Not only did students from the rest of India come to the Valley for higher studies, but we find pilgrims and scholars from Central Asia and China coming to Kashmir to study Sanskrit texts. Heun Tsiang spent two years in the Valley studying Buddhist texts in Sanskrit and so did the earlier scholars Che-mong and Fa-yong. Oukong spent four years in Kashmir and studied Sanskrit and Vinaya from three teachers.

In the age of Asoka, Sanskrit was written both in the Kharosthi and the Brahmi script. In Kashmir the scholars developed a script of their own — the Sarada — which though differing from the Devanagari in details, follows it in its essentials. In the ninth century AD the Tibetans who had no script for their language adopted the Sarada script of Kashmir.

Birch-bark was widely used for both literary writings and government correspondence and commercial transactions. It was also used for packing parcels and lining roofs to make them watertight. The ink used for writing on birch-bark was prepared by a special process so that it might not get faded or washed off by water. Birch-bark likewise is not affected by damp. This way many old manuscripts by being hidden in wells and pits escaped destruction at the hands of many an ignorant and unscrupulous ruler.

Kashmir occupied the pride of place in having a large number of libraries of Sanskrit manuscripts. Temples and *viharas* were the repositories of these literary treasures, but there were huge private libraries too maintained by families having literary traditions. Even as late as 1875 when George Buhler went to Kashmir in search of Sanskrit manuscripts, and when Sanskrit learning there was not as flourishing as in ancient times, he found more than 22 Sanskrit speaking pandits as well as traders and officials who were "possessors of most considerable collections of manuscripts."

Grammar and Prosody

The development of Sanskrit language was an object of special study with the pandits of Kashmir. They made important contribution

to the study of Vedic literature, grammar and philology. *Ubbatbhasa* is a learned exposition of the text of *Sukla-yajurveda*. Panini's monumental work on Sanskrit grammar, the *Astadhyayi*, was commented upon by Patanjali in the *Mahabhasya*, a work of unrivalled importance on grammar. He is said to have lived in the second century BC and the Kashmiri tradition, upheld by several scholars, claims him as having been born in the village of Godra in the south of the Valley.²¹⁶

The study of *Mahabhasya* however, seems to have received a setback towards the beginning of the first century A.D. Bhartrhari mentions Baiji, Sauva and Haryaksha, who by their uncritical methods did much to push the *Mahabhasya* to the background.²⁵² However, in about the fourth century A.D. during the reign of Abhimanyu, Chandracharya and his colleagues brought back into general use the study of *Mahabhasya* which in the absence of competent teachers or correct text had become difficult and disused. Chandracharya founded through his work *Chandra-vyakarna* a school of Sanskrit grammar called the Chandra, second in importance to that of Panini.

Kalnana refers to a similar restoration of the study of Patanjali's great grammatical work under Jayapida. His teacher in grammar, Kshiraswamin, son of Isvarswamin, wrote his well-known commentary on the *Dhatupatha* or the study of verbs, and other smaller grammatical treatises, still extant.²⁵⁴ That Kshiraswamin was a Kashmiri is proved by a passage in the *Vamsastuty* appended by Rajanaka Ananda to his commentary on *Naisadcharita* (composed 1654), where he is claimed to be one of the great scholars produced by the Rajanaka family of Kashmir, along with Kayatta, Uvatta, and Mamatta.²¹⁷ Kayatta, son of Jayatta and a brother of Mamatta, has also given us *Mahabhasyapradipa*, a guide to the study of *Mahabhasya*.

Another commentary on Panini's work, *Kasikavritti*, written jointly by Jayaditta and Vamana, two Kashmiri grammarians, has been mentioned by I-tsiang in the seventh century A.D. Two other Kashmiri grammarians, Bhatta Jagadhara the author of *Balabodini* and Chiku Bhatta of *Baghwritti*, propagated the teachings of the Katantra school, which though founded outside Kashmir had many adherents in the Valley.

In metrics and prosody Kashmiri authors have made valuable contribution to Sanskrit language and literature. Pingalacharya, the author of the well-known work on metrics, *Pingala*, was a Kashmiri and so was Kedara Bhatta who wrote *Vrittiaratnakara*, used widely after *Pingala*. Another work on metrics, *Suvritta-tilaka* was the work of the well-known Kashmiri author, Kshemendra. Mamatta, his later contemporary, wrote a book entitled *Sabdavyaparacharcha*. In the field of lexicography also Kashmir's contribution is considerable. The *Anekanbhakosa* of Mankha is of special importance and is an improvement on preceding authors like Amarasimha. The latter's works were commented upon by Kshiraswamin in his treatise entitled *Narmalinganusasanam*.

Poetics

Both according to their own account and according to the admissions of learned in India, the Kashmirians were formely as distinguished in the '*Alankara-Sastra*', or poetics, as in poetry, and produced a long series of writers on this subject. There is nothing surprising about it, for in a beautiful valley like Kashmir, the accent must necessarily have been on the pursuit of beauty in all its aspects. The Kashmirian writers did not only develop some of the earlier schools of poetics that were born in other parts of India such as *Rasa*, *Alankara*, *Riti*, *Vakroti* and *Auchitya* but made original contribution to the science of poetics with their theory of *Dhvani*.

The *Rasa* school, based on the famous aphorisms of Bharata (*Natyasastra*), found its exponent in Lolluta, a contemporary of king Jayapida (ninth century A.D.). Sankuka, his contemporary, improved upon Lolluta's theory that *Rasa* belonged to the performer only, by explaining that it was related to the spectators as well. A further explanation of *Rasa* was given by Bhatta Nayaka by calling it in its final state as communion with the Highest Spirit. Abhinavagupta's definition of *Rasa* is that it is His manifestation.

Bhatt Udbhatta, the court pandit of king Jayapida wrote profusely on the *Alankara* school. His *Kavyalankaravrtti*, now lost, and *Alankarasangraha* deal in detail with the definitions and explanations of 41 *Alankaras*. Rudratta (ninth century A.D) reviewed the whole

field of poetics in the 16 chapters of his extensive work, *Kavyalankara*. The *Riti* school had its exponent in Vamana, a minister of Jayapida. In his work *Kavyalankara-Sutra* he asserts that *Riti* is the soul of poetry. He is the first to distinguish between *Guna and Alankara* and thus his work is an improvement on Dandin.

As against this assertion we have the claim of *Vakrokti*, a striking mode of speech, to being the soul of poetry, put forth by its originator, Rajanaka Kuntala. In his work *Vakrokti-jivita*, he lays emphasis on this aspect of poetics. But the theory has been severely criticised by another great writer on this subject, Rajanaka Mahima Bhatta, in his *Vyakti-viveka*.

Kshemendra, the polymath of Kashmir, has written on another theory of poetics, that of *Auchitya*, which he illustrates in his work called *Auchalyavichara and Kavikanthabaran*.

But it is for their theory of *Dhvani*, a unique contribution to the science of poetics, that the Kashmirian authors deserve credit. The first propounder of this school was Anandavardhana, who in his *Dhvanyaloka* asserts, that it is *Dhvani* that is the soul of poetry. According to Kane, "the *Dhvanyaloka* is an epoch-making work in the history of *Alankara* literature. It occupies the same position in poetics as Panini's *Astadhyayi* in grammar and Sankaracharya's commentary on *Vedanta*."

Anandavardhana and Theory of 'Dhvani'

Anandavardhana's literary activity falls within the years 860-890 A.D, which almost coincides with the reign of king Avantivarman. It may well be described as the most prosperous age in the political and cultural history of ancient Kashmir. It was in this atmosphere of creative endeavour when sculpture, music, architecture and poetry reached new heights, that Anandavardhana found the inspiration for his epoch-making theoretical work. His own equipment was also amazing; in him was combined wealth of scholarship and erudition, with natural grasp and intuitive insight. His works reveal the vast range of his studies; in them we find quotations from all the important writers of antiquity. His interests were varied — poetry, drama, philosophy, theology, ancient lore, Buddhist classics; he was equally

familiar with them all. Besides his major work on aesthetics, and his poetical compositions, he was also the author of a learned commentary on Buddhist Logic, a Tibetan translation of which is available though the original is lost. He was regarded as an eminent poet, and Kalhana mentions him alongside Sivaswamin and Ratnakara, as a poet rather than a philosopher.

Anandavardhana's masterpiece, *Dhvanyaloka* or the "Light of Suggestion", marks the beginning of a new age in aesthetics. It consists of two main portions — the 'Karikas in which the fundamental principles are stated in a condensed form, and the "Vrittis" or the detailed prose comments on the former. Discarding the *Alankara* and *Guna* theories of Bhamaha and Dandin respectively, which lay stress on ornamental qualities and figures of speech in poetry, he asserts that all the aspects of art can only be harmonised if we grasp with absolute clarity the difference between the language of art and the language of ordinary usage. The fact that even a plain statement of an ordinary event, if made by a poet or an artist, appeals to us, and moves us, shows that artistic representation works upon us *indirectly*, and in a more subtle fashion than ordinary communication. This suggestiveness, or the capacity to produce subtle impressions, Anandavardhana calls *Vyanja Kavya* and the type of poetic or artistic composition in which this quality is successfully utilised is called '*Dhvani*.' Quoting his own words, "those types of artistic creations are designated '*Dhvani*' by the experts, in which the obvious words and meanings are subordinated, and other delightful ideas are suggested, such as we see in the masterpieces of great poetry."

It is interesting to see that while Anandavardhana was later universally revered as a great 'Acharya', he had to face the opposition of some of the lesser poets at Avantivarman's court. Anandavardhana's genius aroused the jealousy of one Jayanta, who derided him as a "self-conceited pedant." But who takes Jayanta's derisive remarks seriously today?

During the hundred years between the exposition of his *Dhvani* theory by Anandavardhana and its final establishment by Abhinavagupta, writers on aesthetics continued to devote their attention to the theory. In spite of the geographical isolation of Kashmir,

the theory was quickly noted by scholarly circles all over India, and we hardly come across any important writer on aesthetics who could ignore it.

The first among the Kashmiri successors of Anandavardhana in aesthetics proper, was Mukula Bhatta, son of Bhatta Kalatta mentioned in the *Rajatarangini*. He wrote a book called *Abhidhavarittimatrika*. Apart from other problems, it is interesting to see that it contains a discussion on the use of words in their various primary and secondary senses, a branch of speculation that has today come in for a good deal of emphasis at the hands of European writers on "semantics."

Anandavardhana's theory came in for direct criticism by Mukula Bhatta's pupil Pratiharenduraja who harked back to the views of Udbhalta, the leader of the *Alankara* school. Another critic was Bhatta Nayaka, an elder contemporary of Abhinavagupta and the author of *Hridaydarpana*. This book which is now known to us only through quotations of others, was considered a valuable contribution to aesthetics.

Bhatta Nayaka was a revivalist and upheld Bharata's views that the "Soul of poetry" was the experience of the reader to be one with the subject through poetic words and expressions rather than by suggestion of '*Dhvani*.' Bhatta Nayaka in spite of his revivalism could be very modern on occasions. He laid great stress on the distinction between Poetry on the one hand and scripture or mythology on the other. The latter, he pointed out, might give us moral injunctions or valuable information, but only Poetry can give us aesthetic pleasure.

Abhinavagupta's teacher, Bhatta Tauta also wrote on aesthetics. His literary activity falls between the years 950-980 ad but his best known work *Kavyakautuka* on which his famous disciple wrote a commentary is unfortunately lost. He attempted to show that when a great dramatic poem is staged or read, all the three 'parties' namely the author, the actor and the reader or spectator pass through essentially the same emotional experience. He was the first to emphasise the importance of the peaceful emotion — '*Shanta Rasa*'—which occupies such an important place in later aesthetic writings.

Abhinava Gupta

It was, however, Abhinavagupta, the famous poet, critic, philosopher and saint of Kashmir who wrote profusely on aesthetics. Like a drama moving to its climax aesthetic thought in Kashmir moved to its highest pitch in the writings of Abhinavagupta, undoubtedly the greatest figure in the history of Indian aesthetics. He was one of those very few individuals who have earned as much reverence for the sublimity of the character as for the magnitude of their intellectual achievements. Even now his name is uttered by unlettered villagers in Kashmir with the deepest respect. It is believed that near the village of Magam on the Gulmarg road, he 'entered samadhi' with 1,200 of his disciples.

In a family full of traditions of scholarship, Abhinavagupta was born some time between 950 and 960 A.D. His ancestor Atrigupta, a reputed scholar of Kanauj, came to Kashmir at the invitation of Lalitaditya and settled permanently in the Valley. Abhinavagupta's grand-father, Varahagupta, and his father, Narsinghagupta, were both well known for their vast learning. From his mother Vimalakala he inherited a deep interest in spiritual practices.

In his childhood, however, Abhinavagupta faced a calamity in the death of his mother and then renunciation of this world by his father. But being gifted with a strong will, he pursued his studies with uncommon zeal. Fortunately he came across teachers of versatile genius. Some of them were versed in Buddhist lore and scripture, others were Jains while still others were Saivas. He studied metaphysics, poetry, aesthetics and took lessons in practical exercises of yoga. With a rare passion for truth, Abhinavagupta through years of superhuman toil, mastered all branches of knowledge.

Then began his own creative activity. He studied all the tantric texts from the point of view of Kashmir Saivism and the result of his labour was his famous work, *Tantraloka*. In his second phase he made a study of all the schools of poetics and produced his famous work on aesthetics, *Abhinavabharati* and *Locana*, a commentary on Anandavardhana's *Dhvanyaloka*. In the third and final phase he was drawn towards metaphysical problems and made his own important formulations which raised Kashmir Saiva philosophy to its highest

level and secured for it a permanent place in the history of human thought.

Abhinavagupta remained a celibate all his life, and in his later years virtually became an ascetic. "This, however," observes Dr. V.S. Naravane, "should not give the impression that he was far removed from the domain of practical human experience. He was a close observer of life and his extraordinary memory enabled him to carry in his mind all the impressions he had gathered from books, conversations with teachers and friends, and his own experience." His works abound with references to joys and sorrows of human life. He shows interest in flora and fauna of the Valley and sings with joy of the beauty of the Vitasta meandering slowly through paddy fields and orchards and trees and villages of Kashmir. He does not hesitate to mention the kinds of wine brewed in Kashmir nor to talk of the physical beauty and complexion of women. In him we find the sage, scholar and man.

In the field of aesthetics Abhinavagupta attempted a double synthesis. He considered one by one the points touched by the '*Rasa*' and '*Dhvani*' schools and making them self-consistent and complete sought to write them in the one stream of thought. His *Abhinavabharati*, a voluminous work of over a thousand pages, deals primarily with the '*Rasa*' theory and the problems raised by it, whereas his *Locana* is concerned with the points raised by Anandavardhana.

Apart from this, his own contribution is the enunciation of *Shanta Rasa*, the mood of serenity and peace, as the ultimate end of art. In his own words, "all emotions, when their exciting conditions are present, emerge from *Shanta*, and when these conditions are withdrawn they again merge into *Shanta*,"

Abhinavagupta's disciple, Mamattacharya also made considerable contribution to poetics. He took his early education at Banaras. His famous work *Kavyaprakasa* possesses such merit that it has been commended upon by more than 70 ancient and modern scholars. It covers the whole ground of rhetoric, deals with the merits and demerits of poetry, the functions of different words and their sources and the figures of speech. He champions the theory of *Dhvani* and attacks with vehemence the upholders of other schools of poetics. His independence of judgment and originality of thought in this field are

well known.

The tenth chapter of *Kavyaparakasa* has been continued by his pupil Allata. Manikyachandra has written the first and most reliable commentary on *Kavyaparakasa*. Rajanaka Ruyyaka, who lived in the 12th century A.D wrote *Alankarasarvasva* and ably summarised the views of the early writers. He has also written *Alankara-anusarini*, *Sahradaya-lila*, *Sanketa-tika*, a commentary on *Kavyaparakasa*, *Vyaktiviveka-vichara*, a commentary on *Vyaktiviveka* of Mahima Bhatta, and *Nataka-mimansa*.

This does not, however, exhaust the list of Kashmirian writers on poetics, which would run to hundreds. It is obvious that the whole literature of Sanskrit poetics has been permeated by their contributions or original works in this field.

Poetry and Drama

Kashmir has produced a galaxy of poets and dramatists in Sanskrit. Influenced by the natural beauty of their homeland, its lofty mountains, lakes, waterfalls and charming flowers of multitudinous colours, they wrote dramas, epics, lyrical as well as dialectic poems, mythological poems, essays, fiction and anthologies.

It is indeed a pity that Sanskrit compositions of Kashmirian poets and authors prior to the sixth century A.D have not so far been discovered, though from the highly developed style and thought of the compositions of the eighth century and onwards it can safely be deduced that these just have been the product of a long period of creative culture. In fact the *Rajatarangini* mentions a number of poets and dramatists who flourished long before the beginning of the Christian era. One, named Chandaka is said to have been a great poet, though no specific work is attributed to him. He may be the same Chandaka to whom some verses are ascribed in Ballabhadeva's *Subhasitavali*. Kalhana records that he flourished in the reign of Tunjina and his plays attracted large audiences.

Another great poet mentioned by Kalhana is Bhartṛmētha who was honoured by Matrigupta, himself a poet, for writing the famous poem *Hayagrivavadha* by "placing below the volume a golden dish, lest its flavour might escape." This famous poem is unfortunately lost

but Bhartṛmētha is mentioned by Kshemendra in the *Suṃttatīlaka* and by Mankha in *Sṛikānthacharita* (ii-53). The latter places him by the side of Subandhu, Bharavi and Bana. Verses are quoted under his name in Srivara's *Subhāṣitavali* and latter anthologies. Dr. Bhaudaji found verses from *Hayagrivavadha* quoted in Raghava Bhatta's commentary on *Sakuntala*.

Matrigupta, the patron of Bhartṛmētha, who ruled Kashmir for some time as the nominee of Vikramaditya of Ujjain, has been supposed by some scholars to have been no less a person than Kalidasa himself. That Matrigupta was a poet and a historical character is proved by his commentary on Bharata's *Natyasastra* which is referred to in Sundarasimha's *Natyapradīpa*. Kshemendra quotes Matrigupta in one of his works and some of his verses have found a place in Vallabhadeva's anthology.

But the arguments in favour of the identification of Matrigupta with Kalidasa are not convincing. These are chiefly based on the synonymity of the two names, Kalidasa and Matrigupta (*Kali: matr, dasa: gupta*), on the absence of any mention of Kalidasa in the *Rajatarangini* and on the attribution of Kalidasa of the Prakrit poem *Setubandha* composed at the request of a king Pravarasena. The latter was assumed to have been Pravarasena II, Matrigupta's successor. Professor Max Muller has reproduced these arguments in his *India*, (pp. 312-347), but has in the same place indicated the grave objections which preclude the acceptance of this identification.

If, however, Matrigupta cannot be identified with Kalidasa, there is a strong presumption in his being a Kashmiri by birth. He is said to have flourished during the latter half of the fifth or the first half of the sixth century A.D. His reference to Huns in Kashmir for the *Raghuvamśa* and other references to the climate and products of the Valley, form the basis of Pandit Lachhmi Dhar Sastri's theory of Kashmir being the birth place of the famous poet-dramatist of Sanskrit literature. His exhaustive research on the subject may be summarized thus.²¹⁸

1. Kalidasa's affectionate description of the rice fields and the songs associated with the rice fields.
2. His description of a living saffron plant which is grown in

Kashmir and which no non-Kashmirian writer is known to have described.

3. His description of the Devadaru forests, lakes, tarns, glades, caves with lions, musk-deer on the higher altitudes.
4. His reference to some sites of minor importance in Kashmir which were till recently considered as imaginary, but which modern research has identified with their ancient names. The sites are only of local importance and could not be known to one who was not in close touch with Kashmir.
5. Kalidasa's description of Kashmir in the *Sakuntala* in which he refers to the lacustrine origin of Kashmir, which is commonly known to Kashmiris.
6. His reference to certain Kashmiri legends such as that of *Nikumbha* which are known only to Kashmiri writers.
7. Kalidasa's personal religion which was the Kashmir Saivism based on the doctrine of the Pratyabhijna philosophy unknown outside Kashmir then. Though this philosophy was developed in its refined form towards the end of the eighth century A.D, there is no doubt that this tendency of thought existed long before its systematisation by Somananda.

Damodaragupta, a famous poet and moralist, was the chief councillor of king Jayapida. Most of his poetical compositions are lost, but he is quoted in several anthologies. His well-known book *Kuttanimata Kavya* which is fortunately still extant is a practical treatise on erotics and being full of interesting stories throws a flood of light on contemporary life.

King Jayapida was the patron of Bhatta Udbhatta, his court poet known chiefly for his writings on aesthetics. He also wrote the poem *Kumarasambhava*. Though not surviving now, some verses of it are found in his *Alankarasangraha*. Kalhana mentions names of Manoratha, Samkhadatta, Chtaka and Samdhimat who also flourished at his court. Verses of Manoratha are quoted in Vallabhadeva's *Subhasitavali*. The works of the other three poets are not traceable now.

Another famous poet of the eighth century A.D was Sankuka who composed a historical poem called *Bhuvanabhyudaya* depicting

the fierce battle for ascendancy between the brothers Mamma and Utpala, the maternal uncles of Chipattajayapida, in which "the flow of the Vitasta was held up by the floating corpses of the warriors falling in the battlefield." The work is not available now, but quotations from it are included in *Subhasitavali* of Vaflabhadeva, and also in *Srangadharapadhati* and *Suktimuktavali*. Sankuka's name has also been referred to in the fourth chapter of the *Kavyaprakasa* where his opinion on a point of poetics is considered authoritative.

Some of the Karkota kings were poets themselves. Apart from a mention of this fact in the *Rajatarangini*, we find fragments of poems written by Muktapida and Jayapida preserved in *Subhasitavali*.

Avantivarman's reign was the glorious period of Kashmirian art and architecture. At his court flourished a number of famous poets. Besides the well-known Anandavardhana whose works have already been noted as the founder of the 'Dhvani' school of aesthetics, there were Sivaswamin, Ratnakara and Muktakana. Sivaswamin seems to have been a Buddhist and wrote a poem named *Kapphinabhyudaya*, of which the theme is the Buddhist legend in which the Buddha intervenes in a feud between Dakṣinapatha and Prasenjit of Sravasti. At the end of the war, which resulted in his victory, Kaphina accepted Buddhism and renounced his worldly attachments. Some of the verses of Sivaswamin are quoted in Kshemendra's *Kavyakantha-bharana* and Vallabhadeva's *Subhasitavali*, which illustrate *sivaswamin's* spirited description of the assembly of chieftains, who wring their hands in fury at aggressive designs of the foe, protest against the policy of procrastination and apathy and plead for an immediate drastic action.

Ratnakara or with his full name Rajanaka Ratnakara Vagisvara, is the author of the great Kavya *Haravijaya*. Composed under king Chippatajayapida the poem runs into 50 cantos and narrates the story of the slaying of demon Andhaka by Siva. The excellence of this work which employs a large variety of metres, matching the sound to the sense, has been praised by several ancient scholars outside Kashmir like the poet Rajasekhara. Besides the *Haravijaya*, Ratnakara is credited with the composition of two smaller poems, *Vakrokti-panchasika* and *Dhvanigathapanchasika*.

None of the compositions of Muktakana are now traceable. He is

known otherwise only from quotations in two treatises of Kshemendra. Another poet whose mention is made by Kalhana was Bhallata the author of the extant *Balltasataka*, a poem of 108 stanzas dealing with morality and conduct. He lived during the reign of king Samkararman. Verses from this work have been quoted by Abhinavagupta Kshemendra and Mamatta.

It is not unlikely that king Samkaravarman who was also known by the name of Yasovarman, composed some poems himself. A lost drama entitled *Ramabhyudaya* written by one Yasovarman, which is cited by Anandavardhana in his *Dhvanyaloka*, probably belongs to him. Some verses written by a poet called Yosavarman and preserved in *Kavindravachana Samuchchaya* and *Subhasitavali*, may also be ascribed to him.

Abhinanda, son of Jayanta Bhatta, who lived in the first half of the tenth century A.D., composed *Kadambari-Kathasara*, a metrical summary of Bana's famous prose romance. Abhinanda in his introduction to the poem traces his descent to one Sakti who had emigrated from Gauda (Bengal) and settled in the south of Kashmir Valley.

The polymath Kshemendra was a poet, moralist, historian, critic, and fable writer, all combined in one. A pupil of Abhinavagupta, he was born in a well-to-do family, some time towards the end of the tenth century A.D. His father's name was Prakasendra and his grandfather's Sindhu. He was widely read and his studies comprised all the sciences and arts then known in Kashmir. He had a thorough knowledge of mathematics, astrology, medicine, surgery, politics, erotics, Saivism and Buddhist philosophy. Though, as he says, he did not enjoy the company of dry logicians and grammarians, he yet studied all the lexicons of his day. He seems to have been fond of songs, novels and interesting conceits of poetry.

Kshemendra's productions are as varied as his studies. His *Bharatamanjari*, *Ramayanamanjari*, *Brhaikathamajari*, *Padyakadambari* and *Avadanakalapalata*, are abstracts from the epics *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, Gunadhya's *Brihatkatha*, Bana's *Kadambari* and the Buddhist *Avadanas*. Several of his works have been lost, among which is the *Nrapavali*, a history of Kashmir referred

by Kalhana in his Chronicle. His extant works include *Nitiklpataru*, *Charucharya*, *Nuilyta*, *Vinayavali*, *Darpadalana*, *Sevyasevakopadesa*, *Munimatmimansa*, *Chaturvargasamgraha*, *Auchityavicharachara*, *Kavikanthabharana*, *Dasavataracha-rita*.

Kshemendra's contribution to Sanskrit literature is unique in one respect. He introduces social satire, mixed with humour and sarcasm. His *Samayamatrika* is a poem of eight chapters narrating the story of the wanderings of a courtesan in the Valley. It is an interesting specimen of satire rarely found in Sanskrit literature, on strolling musicians, women beggars, shop girls, saints, thieves and other classes of people. His *Kalavilasa* depicts various occupations and follies of the people of the time, such as physicians, traders, astrologers, goldsmiths, harlots and saints. His *Darpadalana* condemns pride which is said to spring from birth in a good and rich family, wealth, learning, beauty, valour, charity and asceticism. Kshemendra's *Desopadesa* exposes all kinds of sham in society through his caricatures of the life of various depraved sections of the community, such as cheats, misers, prostitutes, bawds, voluptuaries, students from Gauda (Bengal), old men married to young girls, degraded Saiva Gurus, etc. The *Narmamala* is a Sharp satire on the oppression practiced by the Kayasthas.

Kshemendra's *Brhatkathamajari* is a faithful summary of the now lost *Brhatkatha* of Gunadhya in 7,500 stanzas. It is not merely a condensed version of the original work, but the author has interpolated his own descriptions and writings at several places.

An equally famous poet was Bilhana who left Kashmir in the reign of Kalasa (1063-89 A.D) and rose to great prominence at the court of the Chalukya king Parmadi Vikramaditya Tribhuvanamalla, who appointed him as the "Chief Pandit (Vidyapati) and when traveling on elephants through the hill-country of Karnata, his parasol was borne aloft before the king." He has immortalised his patron in his *Vikramankadevacharita* which is perhaps one of the first Sanskrit poems having a historical approach.

From the last canto of his famous 'Kavya' we learn that his birthplace was Khoiamusa (modern Khonmuh), a village 10 kilometres to the south-east of Srinagar. His father Jyesthakalasa and his mother Nagadevi took particular care of his education and he acquired proficiency in

grammar and poetics. At the time of the nominal rule of Kalasa, he set out for the plains of India to seek fame and fortune. He visited Mathura, Kanyakubja, Prayaga and Banaras. He stayed for some time at the court of Krishna of Dahala and later attracted by the fame of the courts of Dhara and Anhilwad, he left for the latter place where he seems to have stayed for a brief period. From there he went to the sacred shrine of Rameswara and on his way back, reached the court of Kalyan, where his talents were recognised by the king who installed him to the high position of Vidyapati.

The *Vikramankadevacharita*, glorifying king Vikramaditya Tribhuvanamalla of Kalyan (1076-1127 A.D.), is a poem of eighteen cantos opening with an eulogistic account of the Chalukya dynasty and depicting with usual amplifications 'the conquests of Vikramaditya before his accession to the throne, his dethronement of his elder brother Someswara II, his defeat and capture of his younger brother and his numerous wars with the faithless Colas.' Though it has a historical theme, it is in all essentials only a 'kavya' and not a history.

His *Karnasundary*, though written as a romantic tale, actually delineates in a complimentary fashion the marriage of the Chalukya Karnadeva of Anhilwad.

Another poem, generally ascribed to Bilhana, is *Chaurasurata Panchasika*, of 50 amatory verses, sung in the first person, on the topic of secret love. A masterpiece of emotional richness, it shows the author at his best as a writer of lyrical melody.

Bilhana's treatment of a historical theme in the form of a 'Kavya' was imitated by another Kashmiri poet, Sambu, who lived in the court of king Harsa. His *Rajendra-Karnapura* is a high-flown panegyric eulogising his patron and his *Ayotii-muktalata* is a collection of verses on various topics.

Another poet of the same category was Jalhana who left the Valley at the accession of Uccala and took service at the court of king Somapala of Rajauri, on whose life and history he wrote a 'kavya' entitled *Somapalavilasa*. His *Mugdhopadesa* is a poem ethical in character.

Mankha the renowned poet who served under Jayasimha is known by his poem *Srikanthacharita*, written between the years 1135 and 1145 A.D. The subject of the poem is the Puranic legend of Siva's

overthrow of Tripura. But as usual several cantos are devoted to poetic descriptions of the seasons, the sunset, sunrise, court scenes, amusements, etc. We also learn from the third canto of the poem something of the family and personal life of the poet. He was the son of Visvavrata and had three brothers, all occupying responsible posts with the government of the day. When he completed the poem, he put it before an assembly of 30 contemporary scholars, poets and officials where it was publicly read. The list of poets and scholars given by Mankha shows that Kashmir of the 12th century continued to be a centre of Sanskrit learning. One of the scholars was Kalyana (Kalhana) the celebrated author of the *Rajatarangini*. A notable historical data revealed by Mankha's enumeration of the people in this literary gathering is the presence of two ambassadors, Suhala, sent by Govind Chandra, the Rathor of Kanauj (who according to his inscriptions reigned between 1120 and 1144 A.D), and Tejkantha sent by Aparaditya, the lord of the Konkans, whose inscriptions are dated 1185 and 1186 A.D. The mention of the latter showing that political connections existed between Aparaditya and Kashmir during the period 1135 and 1145 A.D, is of great interest, for, it proves that the reign of Aparaditya must have been of long duration, and reduced the gap in the history of the Silharas after Sri Mamvani's inscription dated 1060 A.D very considerably.²⁶⁰

Mankha is the author of a Sanskrit dictionary, a mention of which has already been made.

Among the minor works which were composed during the last years of the Hindu rule, mention may be made of *Haracharitchintamani* of Jayadratha, written probably in the 12th or 13th century. The poem in the 'kavya' style relates in 32 cantos some legends connected with Siva and his incarnations. Placed in some of the famous *tirthas* of Kashmir the legends incidently describe these sacred sites and help in the reconstruction of ancient geography of the valley.

Sanskrit poetry continued to flourish in Kashmir even in the 13th century. Jon a raj a mentions a poet Saka who flourished at the court of Samgramadeva (1235-52 A.D) and composed a poem with his patron as its hero.

The deep religious tendency among Kashmiris inspired them to write devotional songs. Some of the famous poems of this category are *Vakrokti panchasika of Ratnakara*, *Devisataka of Anandavardhana*, *Stotravali of Utpal*, *Sivamahimnah of Pushpadanta* and *stutiakusmanjali of Jagadhar Bhatta*.

Historical Literature

We have already dealt in detail (Chapter two) the importance of Kashmir in the field of historical compositions in ancient times. The *Nilamatpurana* is a story of prehistoric Kashmir. Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* occupies a unique position as the only work on history in Sanskrit with a scientific approach of modern historians. Yet Kalhana was not the first in this line. He mentions the works of 11 preceding historians whose compositions he consulted in producing his famous work. Among the early historians, whose works unfortunately cannot be traced, were Helaraja, Padmamihara, Chavillakara, Suvrata and Kshemendra. Kalhana's tradition was continued by others in this line — Jonaraja, Srivara Prajyabhatta and Suka. That Kashmiri writers possessed a historical sense is proved by Bilhana's *Vikramankadevacharita* which though composed in the 'kavya' style was yet superior in historical approach to the works of Bana and Hemachandra.

Medicine

There are some original works on medicine too. Perhaps as a result of the presence of rich flora and fauna in the Valley, the Vaidyas of Kashmir were inspired to conduct research in the science of medicine. Professor Sylvan Levi after discovering Buddhist manuscripts in Central Aisa and China, came to the conclusion that the famous Charaka the author of *Charakasambhita* belonged to Kashmir. The recession of the text available to us today was done by Dridhabala, a scholar of Kashmir. Jejjata the author of the commentary on the *Charakasambhita*, was also a Kashmiri, and so was Udbhatta who commented upon *Susrutasambhita*.

To erotics Kashmir has made notable contribution. Vasunanda

whom Kalhana mentions as a king ruling in Kashmir after Mihirakula, wrote a book on erotics. *Ratirahasya*, a scientific text book dealing with the problems of sex, both biological and psychological, was written by a Kashmiri pandit, the famous Koka the son of Tejoka. After *Kamasutra* of Vatsyayana it is a very important work on this subject. Kalyanamalla, the writer of *Ananga-ranga* and Kuchimara, the reputed writer of *Tantra* were both Kashmiris. Another writer on this subject was Damodargupta, Jayapida's minister, whose *Kuttanimata Kavya* is an excellent poetical work dealing with the ethics of concubinage.

Several works on *nyaya* have been composed by Kashmirian authors. Jayanta Bhatta who seems to have lived during the reign of Samakaravarman (883-902 A.D) wrote three books, *Nyayamanjari*, *Nyayakalika* and *Agamadambara*, the latter being the first philosophical play in Sanskrit.

Fable Literature

Kashmir has a long tradition of storytelling that goes back to dim antiquity. One may speculate as to why such a tradition should have developed in the Valley to an almost incredible extent. Is it because a peaceful atmosphere and secluded existence encouraged talent in this direction? Was this talent further strengthened by the long winter months of inactivity, when men had the leisure to weave fact and fancy together?

Whatever the reason might be, many of the world's best-known tales have originated in Kashmir. Apart from Gunadhya's legendary *Brihatkatha*, which is no longer extant, and Somadev's *Kathasaritsagara*, many other collections of stories were produced among which Kshemendra's *Brihatkathamajari* and a version of *Panchatantra* known as *Tantrakhyayika* are particularly significant.

Somadeva who may be described as one of the founders of fiction and whose work has reached the remotest corners of the world in one form or another, wrote his masterpiece for the edification of queen Suryamati, the wife of king Anania (1028-1063). It is based on the *Brihatkatha*, and written in flowing narrative style, makes delightful reading. Without doubt it is the largest collection of stories in the world the number of stanzas alone not counting the prose passages,

is more than 22,000; it is twice as big as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* put together.

The *Kathasaritasagara*, besides being a version of the lost work of Gunadhya, also carries most of the stories contained in the *Panchatantra*. This version is different from the original and Hertel has advanced a strong case in favour of Kashmir being the original home of the *Panchatantra* stories.

Kshemendra's *Brihatkathamajari* which though written earlier, does not come up to the standard of Somadeva's work, but it is a valuable and entertaining collection of fables. The Kashmirian *Brihatkatha* from which both Kshemendra and Somadeva drew their inspiration, was most probably not the *Brihatkatha* of Gunadhya. It seems to have been an older Kashmirian version which had undergone considerable changes. This is evident from the divergence of the works of the two Kashmirian authors with that of the Nepal version of *Buddhswammī's Brihatkathasamgraha*.

It is interesting to note that several anthologies on various topics as love, nature, conduct, etc, from the work of eminent Sanskrit poets and authors were compiled in ancient Kashmir. Apart from their value as giving specimens of some of the best compositions in Sanskrit literature, they supply a clue to the existence of several eminent poets whose works cannot otherwise be traced. Vallabhadeva has compiled *Subhasitavali* containing 3,527 verses in 101 sections with quotations from 360 authors. Jalhana has compiled *Suktimuktavali* quoting 380 poets. It seems that the preparation of anthologies was a cultivated art with Kashmirians.

Prolific literature on Buddhist religion, law and polity, was produced by Kashmirian authors and *Acharyas'* a detailed survey of which has already been given in Chapter four.

Kashmir Saivism

We have already traced the part played by Kashmirian philosophers in the development of Mahayana, and the impact of Saivism on the Buddhist philosophy of Arhatship and disciplinary control of thought and action enjoined by it for the attainment of Nirvana or liberation from the circle of birth and death. Mahayana which may rightly be

called a synthesis of the concept of Siva and Sakti and of the early Buddhist philosophy, attained singular popularity and became a powerful philosophic-cum-religious force not only in northern India, but also in Central Asia and China. By the end of the eighth century, however, Buddhism seems to have lost much of its pristine glory and was slowly being supplanted by the re-emerging Brahmanic thought and philosophy in India. For Buddhism never ousted Brahmanism from any large part of India. The two systems coexisted as popular religions all along, right from the death of Buddha, and in Kashmir as we have already noted the two religions had in fact no separate existence. Even when by the end of the ninth century A.D. Buddhism had had its day in the rest of India, it still continued to have its influence in Kashmir and along with Brahminism enjoyed patronage of the kings and their courts.

Period of Religious Fermentation

But there was a time when the influence of Buddhism was deeply resented. Especially after the reign of Kaniska, when under Nagarjuna's leadership Buddhism became firmly established.²¹⁹ Saiva philosophers thought that an organised attempt was necessary to counter the preaching of 'Sunnyavad' or agnosticism of the Buddhists. The only doctrine which could have proved strong and vigorous enough to serve the purpose was the absolute idealism of the Advaita school. We, therefore, find that many of the older writings of Saiva philosophers were deliberately re-interpreted and modified in the direction of Advaita.

This was no doubt strengthened by a wave of Brahminic revivalism raised as a result of Sankaracharya's preachings in the rest of India. Though there is no direct evidence of his having visited the Valley, and its only description occurs in the *Sankaradigvijay*, it has been pointed out by many scholars that his visit might have in fact taken place. In a period when Kashmir was at the height of its material and cultural prosperity, the visit of such an outstanding and dynamic personality as Sankaracharya can well have been a certainty. No doubt we find echoes of his impress and influence in the writings of Kashmirian philosophers like Utpalacharya and Abhinavagupta.

So we find a great fermentation of philosophic and religious thought in the Kashmir of eighth and ninth centuries. Already besides Buddhistic philosophy based mostly on Samkhya there were several other schools of philosophy flourishing in Kashmir. Dualism had its exponents in Sadyojyoti, Brihaspati and Sankarananda. This school had become so powerful that the great Abhinavagupta to refute their tenets had to write a book entitled *Bhedavada-Vidharma*.

It was in such a milieu that the monistic philosophy of Kashmir Saivism took shape until it attained the status of a distinct school of philosophy differing so fundamentally from the other systems of Saivism that Madhavacharya in his *Sarva-darsana-sangraha* does not include it under *Saiva-darsanas* but deals with it as *Pratyabijnadarsana*.

Origin of the Trika

Kashmir Saivism, known as Trika-Sastra or simply Trika, and more rarely, also as Rahasya-Sampradaya and Tryambaka-Sampradaya, is so called either because it accepts as most important the triad, *Siddha*, *Namaka* and *Manali*, out of the 92 Agamas recognised by it; or because the triad consisting of Siva, Sakti and Anu, or again of Siva, Sakti and Nara, or lastly, of the goddesses Para, Apra and Paratapara is recognised; or because it explains three modes of knowledge of Reality, namely non-dual (*abheda*), non-dual-cum-dual- (*bhedabeda*), and dual (*bheda*).

The system has two main branches, Spanda or Pratyabijna. In fact, many classics of the school include the word Spanda or Pratyabijna in their very titles. The Trika is also known as Svatantryavad, Svatantrya and Spanda expressing the same concepts. 'Abhasavad' is another name of the system. It is called Kashmir Saivism, because the writers who revealed it and enriched its literature belonged to and flourished in Kashmir. Indeed the doctrine of the Trika may be regarded as a permanent and enduring heritage which Kashmir has contributed to the rich treasure of Indian philosophy.

The Trika is essentially a spiritual philosophy, because its doctrines regarding Reality, the world, and man are derived from a wealth of spiritual experiences. Its greatest exponents were *Yogins* of high stature who had wonderful insight into abstruse points of philosophy. It has

been recognised in India and other countries that various kinds of discipline, which may be generally called Yoga, reveal the mystery of the inner being and nature of man, as also the art of using the powers of knowledge and action hidden at present in unknown regions of our being and nature. The Trika is a rational exposition of a view of Reality obtained primarily through more-than-normal experiences of yoga and divine revelation.

Although the Trika form of Saivism would seem to have made its first appearance in Kashmir at the beginning of the ninth or perhaps towards the end of the eighth century A.D., *Sivasasana* or *Sivagama*, that is Saivism as such, is far older than this date. Indeed we can trace its beginnings in the Vedic Revelations. The *Rajatarangini* mentions the existence of Siva shrines and temples long before the advent of Buddhism in the Valley under Asoka. According to the belief and tradition of the Kashmir Saivas, all *Sastras* which are but thoughts expressed as speech, originally existed as unuttered thought and experience of the Supreme Deity. Next, on the manifestation of universe, began the All-transcending Word (Para Vak), which put forth another form, that of *Pashyanti* or Vision of the Whole Universe. With the progress of the manifestation of the Universe came the *Madhyana* or middle one which served as a link between the *Pashyanti* and the next below stage of *Vaikhri* or 'flowing art of speech'. And what are called the *Saiva Sastras* are nothing but this Divine stream of spoken words.

Literature on Trika

The origin of the earliest Saiva works in Kashmir is lost in antiquity. It is said that there were originally 64 systems of philosophy covering every aspect of thought and life, but they all gradually disappeared and the world was plunged into spiritual darkness. Then Siva goes the legend, moved by pity for the ignorance and sufferings of mankind, appeared on the Kailasa mountain in the form of Srikantha. He commanded the sage Durvasa to spread true knowledge among men. Durvasa created three sons by the power of his mind and to one of these, the Tryambaka, he imparted the knowledge of monistic philosophy.

The literature of the Trika falls into three broad divisions: the Agama Sastra, the Spanda Sastra, and the Pratyabijna Sastra.

The Agama Sastra, regarded as of superhuman authorship, lays down both the doctrine (*Jnana*) and the practice (*Kriya*) of the system. They are believed to have come down (*Agama*) through the ages, being handed down from teacher to pupil. Among the works belonging to this sastra are a number of Tantras of which the chief ones are: *Malini Vijaya*, *Svachchanda*, *Vijnana-bhairava*, *Uchchusma-bhairava*, *Ananda-bhairava*, *Mrgendra*, *Matanga*, *Netra*, *Naisvasa*, *Svayambhuva*, and *Rudra-yamala*. These were interpreted mostly as teaching a dualistic doctrine, to stop the propagation of which the *Siva Sutra*, expounding a purely Advaitic metaphysics, was revealed to a sage called Vasugupta (c 900 A.D.). On these *Sutras* there are the *Vritti*, the *Vartika* by Bhaskara, and the commentary called *Vimarsini* by Kshemaraja.

The exact date of Vasugupta, the founder of Kashmir Saivism, is not known for certain. But since his disciple according to Kalhana lived at the end of the ninth century A.D.,²⁶² he may also be placed near about the same period. Most of his works are now lost. His *Spandamata* and his commentary on the *Bhagavadgita* may perhaps be traced in the works of later writers on Saivism. About the personality and lineage of Vasugupta, all that we learn from his pupils is that he lived in retirement as a holy sage in Sadarhadvana (modern Harwan), behind the Shalimar Garden on the Dai Lake.

We are told in the *Siva-sutra-vimarsini*, that Vasugupta, while residing in his hermitage below the Mahadeo peak, had one night a dream in which Siva appeared and disclosed to the sage existence of certain Sutras — embodying the essence of the *Siva-Sasana* — inscribed on a rock lying at a certain spot in the valley below the Mahadeo peak. The inscribed side which was turned downwards would, if he approached the rock early the next morning and touch it, turn round and the Sutras would be revealed to him. Vasugupta as directed in the dream found the rock which on his touch turned round, revealing the Sutras to the sage who learnt them by heart and propagated them to the "world immersed in spiritual darkness."

A different version of this tradition has been recorded by some

writers. Kshemaraja records that the *Siva-Sutras* were not found inscribed on the rock but were revealed to Vasugupta in a dream by Siva Himself. However this may be, and, however Vasugupta may have obtained them, it is clear that the *Siva Sutras* as taught by him laid the foundation of the Advaita Saivism of Kashmir.

The *Spanda-Sastra* lays down the main principles of the system in greater detail and in a more amplified form than the *Siva-Sutras*, without entering into philosophical reasonings in their support. Of the treatises belonging to this *Sastra* the foremost are: the *Spanda-Sutras*, generally called *Spanda Karikas*; and the *Vritt* which together with the former, is called *the Spanda-Sarvasva*.

Kshemendra (c1015 A.D) attributes *the Spanda-Sutras* to Vasugupta himself, but most probably they were composed by the latter's pupil, Kallata.

It is clear from all accounts that the chief agent by whom Vasugupta had his teachings promulgated was Kallata who spread their knowledge by writing commentaries on the *Siva-Sutras*. According to Kalhana, he 'descended to the earth for the benefit of the people' during the reign of Avantivarman (855-883 A.D). He wrote a commentary called *Spanda-Sarvasva* on his teacher, *Spandamrita*. His two other books, *Tatvartha-Chintamani* and *Madhuwahini*, both of them now lost, were commentaries on *the Siva Sutras*.

There are several commentaries on the *Spanda-Sutras*. Ramakantha, a pupil of the great Utpala, (900-950 A.D) has written the *Vritti*. Utpala Vaisnava has commented upon the *Spanda-Sutras* in his *Pradipika* and Kshemaraja has written the *Spanda Samdoha*, a commentary on the first *Sutra*, but giving the purport of the whole work.

Pratyabijna-Sastra

From the above it would appear that Vasugupta did no more than simply transmit the *Sutras* with their meanings to Kallata who spread their knowledge by writing explanatory treatises on them. In the *Spanda-Sarvasva* he 'gathered together' the meaning of the *Siva Sutras* and together with his other commentaries on the latter, handed them down to his pupil Pradyumna Bhatta (c 900 A.D) who was also

a cousin of his, being the son of his maternal uncle. Pradyumna Bhatta in his turn handed the teaching to his son Prajnarjuna and he to his pupil Mahadeva. The latter again transmitted it to his son Shrikantha Bhatta from whom Bhaskara, son of Divakara, received them and wrote his *Varttika* on them. In the *Varttika* of Bhaskara, therefore, we have what Kallata must have taught as the meaning of *Siva-Sutras*—a mere religious doctrine without entering into any philosophical reasoning in its support.

Yet in a country like India, where philosophic reasoning has from early times played such an important part, it was essential for any system of religion to give full philosophical reasons in its support, if it was at all to hold its own especially in an age when Buddhism exercised such a great influence as it did in Kashmir about the time the Advaita Saivism as represented by the Trika made its appearance. This need must have been felt almost at the beginning — a need which was not met by the writings of Kallata. So the philosophical side was attended to by Somananda, who like Kallata may have been a pupil of Vasugupta himself. While Kallata may be said to have handed down the doctrine as a system of religion, Somananda supplied the logical reasoning in its support and made a system of Advaita Philosophy of what was at first taught as a system of faith. And thus was founded the Pratyabijna-Sastra which may be regarded as the philosophy proper of the Trika. It deals rationally with the doctrines, tries to support them by reasoning and refutes the views of the opponents. The originator of this Sastra, the Siddha Somananda (c 850-900 A.D.) was most probably a pupil of Vasugupta. He is also spoken of as the originator of reasoning (*Tarkasya-karta*) in support of the Trika.

His work which lays the foundation of the philosophy of the Trika was the *Siva-dristi*. He also composed a *Vritti* on this work, but this, with other works of his are now only known by name and from quotations from them.

Somananda tells us a good deal about his lineage. He claims to have descended from the sage Durvasa through the line of that sage's son Tryambaka. The 19th generation of the latter (first 15 being 'mind born') was represented by Ananda of whom Somananda was

born.

We know from Abhinavagupta the period when Somananda must have lived. Narrating his own succession from Somananda in the line of discipleship, Abhinavagupta says that Somananda's pupil was the famous Utpala, son of Udayakara. He was followed by Lakshmana Gupta (c. 950-1000 A.D) who was the teacher of Abhinavagupta. We know that the latter lived in the first quarter of the 11th century and thus Somananda must have flourished towards the end of the ninth century A.D.

Thus it will be seen that the origin of both the *Faith and Philosophy* of Kashmir Saivism — as the teachings of the Agama and Spanda *Sastras* on the one hand and of the *Pratyabijna Sastra* on the other may respectively be called — had their birth towards the end of the eighth or the beginning of the ninth century A.D; and they were founded by men who were regarded as holy sages.

The work of Somananda was carried on in greater detail by Utpala who wrote *Pratyabijna-Sastras* which may be regarded as the basic book of Kashmir. Saivism containing in its essence all the fundamental ideas which were later elaborated by *Abhinavagupta*. This is the first use of the word *Pratyabijna* and the very high status of this work may be inferred from the fact that after it was written, the entire system came to be known as *Pratyabijna-Sastra*. And finally, gathering together the literature upon the subject and creatively developing and correlating all the fundamental ideas, Abhinavagupta raised the Kashmir Saiva philosophy to its highest pinnacle. His *Tantraloka* and *Pratyabijna-Vimarsinu* though claiming to be mere expositions of the *Pratyabijna-Sutra*, are original works of very high merit.

Among the subsequent writers on the *Pratyabijna-Sastra* may be mentioned Kshemaraja Yogaraja, Jayaratha and Sivopadhyaya.

Kshemaraja, a pupil of Abhinavagupta, wrote the *Siva-sutravimarsini* and several other works. Yogaraja who was a pupil apparently of both Abhinavagupta and Kshemaraja is the author of a commentary on Abhinavagupta's *Parmartha-Sara*. Jayaratha who lived in the 12th century A.D wrote a commentary on *Tantraloka* and Sivopadhyaya who came much later (18th century A.D) commented upon Abhinavagupta's *Vijnana-bhairava*.

After this date we do not find any great writer on Saivism of Kashmir, although its study and practice was and to some extent still is, continued by outstanding pandits of Kashmir.

In addition to the three main divisions of the Saiva literature we have a number of devotional compositions called "*Stotras*" which give expression to philosophical doctrines of the system in a devotional form: and also a number of compositions in the daily practices and ceremonials to be performed by a Saiva. The latter keep the doctrine a living force in the everyday life of the great mass of Kashmiri Brahmins who are the followers of this cult.

Kashmir Saivism has now attracted the attention of theologians and scholars in the rest of India and abroad and has become an object of serious study by them. It is, in fact, "a virgin field of research, and will repay the most conscientious labour of philosophers for many years to come."²²⁰

The Philosophy of Trika

Unlike other forms of Saivism, the Trika is essentially a monistic doctrine. In this it is much in consonance with the Advaitic Vedanta. This emphasis on monism may be as a result of the influence of Sankaracharya, but we must at the same time recognise that Kashmir Saivism has also fundamental differences with Vedanta as preached by the great Sankara. It does not, for instance, emphasise either the infallibility or the eternity of the Vedas and Upanisadas, nor does it deny the reality of the world.

Abhinavagupta boldly asserts that he must give first place to facts of experience, second to reason and only third place to the scriptures. This attitude towards the Vedas can perhaps be explained by the fact that Kashmir Saivism has absorbed much of the influence of Samkhya and Buddhism. The first is semi-heterodox, being atheistic and the second frankly heterodox. This influence of heterodox philosophies particularly of Buddhism, has resulted in a liberal attitude in extending the right of philosophical knowledge to all sections of society, irrespective of sex, caste or position.

The Vedanta holds that appearances are unreal and illusory, and that the one reality is what lies behind them all, the Brahmin. Their

presence is only due to *maya* and will continue only till *moksha* (salvation) is attained. They then cease to exist. The Trika, on the other hand, holds that appearances are real, in the sense they are aspects of the real and emanate from it. Nothing can exist outside Paramesvara and appearances thus cannot be unreal. They cannot be merely the creations of *maya*.

Absolute Reality

The ultimate reality is variously designated in Trika as Atman, Chit, Chaitanya, Siva, Paramasiva. It is the true and innermost self in every being, is a changeless reality of the nature of a purely experiencing principle, as distinguished from whatever may assume the form of either the experienced or of the means of experience. It is pure consciousness self-consciousness, integral or supreme experience, the benign "One, the highest Good and Bliss, the Supreme Lord, formless and yet informed with all forms and free from all limitations in space and time."²²¹

Reality is ineffable and beyond all descriptions, yet the Trika tries to formulate a philosophy about its nature. But this philosophy is, it should be understood, not regarding the reality as it is in itself, but only as the creator or manifestor of the universe. And, as the underlying reality in everything, Siva is all pervading; and at the same time all transcending. He has primarily a twofold aspect — an immanent aspect in which He pervades the universe, and a transcendental aspect in which He is beyond all universal manifestations. Indeed, the universe with all its variety of objects and means of experience is nothing but a manifestation of the immanent aspect of Paramasiva Himself. It has no other basis or ingredient in itself.

Siva as Sakti

This aspect of His is called Sakti (Power), which, being only an aspect is not in any way different from, or independent of, Paramasiva, but is one and the same with Him. Like fire and its burning power, Siva and Sakti are the same identical fact, though they are spoken as distinct. Considered as purely transcendent, Siva is *sava*, dead as it

were; but in truth there is perfect equilibrium between Siva and Sakti, and as such the integrality is designated as Parmasiva. If anything, Sakti is His Creative Power, and is spoken of as His feminine aspect.

Sakti-Tattva or Ideal Manifestation

In the Trika philosophy we find a lot of emphasis laid on the qualities of '*Prakasa*' and '*Vimarsa*' the attributes of the Individual as well as the universal self. '*Prakasa*' is the capacity of the self to serve as a 'mirror' of psychical images. It 'shines' just as a mirror which reflects a lamp, becomes itself luminous. '*Vimarsa*' is Sakti, it is vibration; it is Siva's awareness of Himself as the integral and all-comprehensive ego. When there is the reflection of Siva in Sakti, there emerges in His heart the sense of 'I'. '*Vimarsa*' refers to the capacity to know itself in all its purity. The universal self also shines and knows Itself; but whereas the individual self is affected by external cause, the Absolute can shine only by Its own light.

Thus, while '*Vimarsa*' is taken to be the cause of the manifestation and dissolution of the universe, it is so only in the wider sense of being Sakti and not as the reflection as 'I'. Or, in other words, while everything is a manifestation out of '*Vimarsa*', everything does not have '*Vimarsa*'. A jar or a pot, for instance, does not have '*Vimarsa*' or the sense of 'I'. So the more of self-consciousness one has, the more of '*Vimarsa*' also one has and thus nearer to Siva or pure consciousness. That is why the practical discipline of the system enjoins the development of the sense of 'I' as being the whole, as identical with the universe.

And since Chit, illumination cannot be without self-consciousness, it therefore sees itself in Sakti which is compared to a mirror. Sakti is thus Siva's power of turning upon Himself. *Chit-Sakti*, the power of self-consciousness, entails *ananda*, enjoyment and wonderment on the part of Siva; bliss gives rise to *ichchha*, desire to create; desire to create cannot be fulfilled unless there is *jnana*, knowledge of what is to be created and how; this knowledge is followed by the actual creation or manifestation, the power of which is *Kriya-shakti*.

With these five principal aspects of His Sakti, of which there are in reality an infinite number of modes, Paramasiva manifests Himself—or which is the same thing He manifests His Sakti—as the Universe.

And He does this of his own free and independent will without the use of any other material save His own Power, and in Himself as the basis of the Universe. And since there is nothing apart from, independent of, Siva, the elements of the Universe can be nothing but Siva Himself.

Thus in reality the universe is only an expansion' of the Power of Paramasiva in His aspect of Sakti. By this aspect He becomes both and pervades the universe thus produced while yet He remains the ever transcendent Chaitanya without in any way being affected by this manifestation.

This manifestation is actually a phase of the eternal cycle of manifestation and dissolution on the part of Sakti. When she 'expands' or opens herself out (*unmesa*) the universe comes to be (*Sristi*) and when she 'gathers' or closes herself up (*nimisa*), the universe disappears as a manifestation (*Pralaya*). There have been countless universes before and there will be equally countless number of them in the end-less futurity of time, each successive universe being determined in its character by its predecessor by a kind of causal necessity.

But why does the Absolute manifest itself at all, why this never-ending process of *Sristi* and *Pralaya*? Abhinavagupta answers in is question in a lucid way. We cannot, he says ask why a thing does something, which is involved in its very constitution. It is, for instance, absurd to ask *why* fire burns and *why* water quenches thirst. The only possible answer is that it is the very *nature* of fire to burn and of water to satisfy thirst. It is the very nature of consciousness to assume many forms and Siva's self-imposition of limitation upon Himself and also His breaking the fetters and returning to His native glory may both be called as His *krida* or play.

Anutva or Atomicity

The account of the process of manifestation of the universe, as given by the Trika, is very elaborate and complicated *Unmesa* or opening out is in one sense a limitation of Siva Who, to all appearances, disappears. In fact the universe, which is the collective name of the system of limited subjects and objects, cannot come into manifestation unless Siva assumes limitation. This power of obscuration or self-

limitation is called *tirodhanā*, and the actual limitation takes the form of *anutva* or atomicity. It is also known as *sankocha* or contraction.

Because of this contraction there is effected a dichotomy in Siva, who is consciousness-power. In this dichotomy the two attributes namely consciousness (*bodha*) and power or independence (*Swatantrya*) get separated from one another. Though neither of them is completely devoid or empty of the other, we can for all practical purposes say that the aspect of consciousness loses the integral self-consciousness. And thus Siva does not see the universe to be identical with Himself. In other words, since the universe is originally Sakti, consciousness becomes static and sterile and power becomes blind of the awareness of consciousness. Atomicity therefore is the condition of powerless awareness and senseless power.

Evolution of Material Universe

So far we have been dealing with the evolutionary stages in the manifestation of the cosmic experiences of transcendental unlimited beings or divinities, which stages necessarily lead to similar experiences on the part of limited beings. This brings the exponents of the Trika to the standing difficulty of all philosophy, *viz*, the transition from the unlimited to the limited; from the perfect and pure because unlimited to the imperfect and impure, because limited. This transition, predicates the Trika, is effected by Sakti acting in her aspect of the Principle of Negation in a limited form, *viz*, obscuration, a power or force called *maya*.

For, after the primary limitation of atomicity, Siva undergoes a secondary limitation with the help of *maya*, and then Siva is described as Purusa. *Maya* has the function of obscuring and thereby limiting the Absolute Experience. Under its influence relations begin to appear, which by their very nature are limited in themselves. The Trika recognises five such relations, namely, *Kala* or limited duration; *Niyati* or regulation in space; *Raga* or attachment to particular things; *Vidya* or limited knowledge; and *Kala* or the power of limited creation. These five categories along with *maya* are known as the six *Kanchuka* meaning sheath or cloak, which 'wrap up' the limited individuals into these relations.

And thus Siva as Purusa is limited in time and space and has limited knowledge, authorship, and interest or enjoyment. *Maya* also provides location and object to the Purusa by evolving the physical universe. And as the process of opening out or manifestation of Sakti proceeds, the distance between the 'subject and object' *aham* and *idam* which originally in the Paramasiva was nothing beyond a polarity of the two, increases till they are sundered apart.

Simultaneously with the manifestation of Purusa, the 'Prakriti' is also evolved. The Purusa is only a limited form of the Absolute. It cannot exist without relations. And relations necessarily involve some other term to give meaning to them. The coming into existence of 'Prakriti' is thus inevitable. Thus Trika does not give an independent reality to 'Prakriti' as the Samkhya does, for according to it, 'Prakriti' represents a stage in the evolution of the universe out of Paramasiva.

Once 'Prakriti' is manifested, other categories soon make their appearance. The first are the three principles of mental operations — Buddhi, Ahamkara and Manas. Buddhi is the impersonal state of conscious, or rather it is that state which holds on to general ideas as distinct from ideas of particular facts. Ahamkara is that which gathers and stores up the memories of personal experiences. It identifies and assimilates the experiences of the present; and it thus constitutes our personal ego. Manas is that which seeks and singles out particular sensations from among a whole group of them. It builds up particular images and coordinates them.

Perception, however, is also bound up with our receptors or sense organs on the one hand and the actual stimuli of nature on the other. Moreover, as a result of perceptions we are normally led to actions and response as well. These considerations explain the 'Tattvas' which emerge next. There are the five senses—the *Jananendriyas*—and the five powers of movement or action—the *Karmendriyas*. There are also the subtle entities, which make possible the actual perception of things. These subtle, invisible realities are 'sound-as-such' as distinguished from particular sounds; colour as such as distinct from specific colours like blue or green; and so on with reference to every sensation. These 'essences' of sensation are called 'Tanmatras', and there are naturally five of them — *Shabda*, *Sparsha*, *Rupa*, *Rasa* and

Gandha. Tanmatra corresponding to the auditory the tactual the visual, the politic and the olfactory sensations.

When this stage is reached the Purusa is almost ready for its practical existence and the last step is materialisation that is the emergence of actual material elements. These are the five 'Bhutas' traditionally recognised by all ancient thinkers — fire, earth, water, air and sky.

Bondage and Liberation

And so we come to a close of the metaphysical part of Trika philosophy. No philosophical system can rest content merely with the formulation of a chain of realities. There are other problems about the nature and origin of human knowledge, of the relation of cause and effect and above all the basic question of the bondage of the human soul and the ways and means of its liberation.

Siva as Sakti manifests Himself as a correlated order of knowers knowables, and means of knowledge. This threefold self-division of Siva presupposes a limitation imposed by Siva upon Himself. The self-limited Siva is designated the *Pasu* or the 'animal, Jiva, Samsarin, etc. The signs of the *Pasu* are raise identification of the self with the not-self ascribing not-self to the self, having limited authorship, knowledge, interest, pervasion and duration, and being subject to causally.

The atomic or basic limitation or impurity of the bound self (*anavamala*) is reinforced by two other impurities, namely *mayaiymala* and *karmamala*. The former represents the whole series of categories, beginning from the covers or *Kanchuka* that create the physical organism on the subjective side, and evolve the physical world down to the earth on the objective side. The latter (*karmamala*) is responsible for continuing the fetters or embodiment. It is due to this impurity that the Purusa becomes subject to good or bad acts, and becomes entangled in repeated births and deaths.

To realise the unfettered condition, to recognise oneself as that which has become or even is, everything, to have unlimited power to know, enjoy and manifest self-bliss, to be infinite and eternal, to be completely free from and independent of *Niyati*, that is, regulation or

causally — this is the destiny of the Pasu. To be, or rather to recognise oneself as Siva is his goal.

Obviously, the limited individual is subject to ignorance (*ajnana*), which according to the Trika is twofold, namely *paurusa* and *baudha*. *Paurusa ajnana* is the innate ignorance in the very soul of man. It is the primal limitation, the original impurity or *anavamala*, a consequence of the limitation taken willingly and playfully by Siva upon Himself, Siva alone can liquidate it through His dispensation of grace (*anugraha*), called technically *Saktipata* or the descent of Siva's force to break this limitation. Divine grace leads to the destruction, of all fetters (*pasakshya*) and the restoration of the divinity in man (*sivatva-yojana*). How and when this force will descend cannot be indicated because His nature is freedom and spontaneity.

But in spite of this spiritual gain coming to the soul, the Jiva or the bound individual may not know it, for he has to know things through the instrument of his *buddhi*, his intelligence which is gross and impure. So, actually speaking, the Jiva has to adopt other means to know and enjoy his newly won spiritual gain.

The most important of these is *diksa* or initiation. The Trika says that as a result of *Saktipat* one is brought to a real *guru*, *Diksa* awakens the Kriyasakti in the limited soul which ultimately means the soul's ability to absorb and integrate the 'it' or the objective seemingly separate from itself, within its own soul. This is the dawning of the *paurusajnana*, the true knowledge about the real and ultimate nature of the Purusa.

To be able to enjoy in life this inherent, reawakened Siva hood, to attain *jivanmukti* or liberation from the bonds of ignorance even while the soul is associated with the body, it is necessary that *baudhajnana*, or knowledge of this internal liberated condition through *buddhi*, be attained also. This can be achieved by the purification of *buddhi*. The means of which are the study and deeper understanding of *Sastras*. It does not mean merely scholarship or repetition of logical formulae. It demands a deeper discipline and it is this latter that provides a basis for the practical injunctions of the Saiva religion.

Paths to Liberation

The religious literature of Kashmir Saivism is very vast and much of it falls outside the scope of our present review. The borderline between religion and philosophy, however, has never been very sharp in India. And the masters of the Trika philosophy have also laid down the means of liberation of human soul from bondage. It is remarkable that these are open to all human beings without any distinction of sex, creed, caste or colour. Trika also forbids suppression of any thought in opposition to Saivism.

Traditionally, four different means or '*Upayas*' are recognised. The first is immediate through special grace. In this path to liberation no active process on the part of the individual is evolved. Sakti Herself is said to be the direct means, working through the teacher. This is known as '*Anupaya*' or '*Anandopaya*.'

The second method is through destruction of the '*Vikalpas*' leading to definite knowledge. In this method the strong urge and will-to-know' of the individual is emphasised and it is, therefore, known as the '*Ichchopaya*'.

In the third category falls the so-called '*Saktopaya*', in which Intuition is given a dominant place. This method involves yogic perfection and owes much to the influence of Samkhya and yoga philosophies.

The fourth and the last means to liberation is the sum-total of all religious observances including meditation, repetition of the sacred name and other external practices.

Through these means or '*Upayas*' the limited individual, in spite of his being deficient in power (*sakti-daridra*), attains to the glorious knowledge of his own true self. In other words he is liberated from *maya* and 'unwrapped' of her five *Kanchukas* or sheaths.

Harmony the Watchword of Trika

The Trika, however, does not stop with the deliverance of the soul from *maya*, from the delusion of duality: it goes further to the concept of divinisation of the soul, which means the recognition of its own identity with Paramasiva. And this recognition is the same as realising

identity with everything and also freedom from everything. When this state is achieved, the individual feels that he is "nothing in particular and yet all things together." Thus, in a sense, harmony is the watchword of the practical spiritual discipline of the Trika.

It will thus be seen that the Trika philosophy promises to satisfy all sides of human nature, of knowledge, love, and will. Siva being unitary consciousness as such, the realisation of Siva gives knowledge of everything by identity with everything; and Siva being at constant play with His own Sakti, there is ample scope for *bhakti*, devotion or love; also to recognise one self as Paramasiva means mastery and lordship of *sakti* and thus implies sovereign and unrestricted will. Further the theistic element is brought out by the rejection of the yoga view that release is attained by the unaided effort of the spiritual aspirant, and by the admission that the final step of liberation is provided by *anugraha* or the grace of Siva Himself.

Relation with South Indian Saivism

Saivism, which had reached its apogee in the 12th century A.D., we have already, noted some of the fundamental differences between this school of Saiva philosophy and that of South Indian Saivism. That both have also close affinities is quite apparent from the fact that Kashmir Saivism and Saiva sidhanta build up their doctrine from the basic conception Advaita or monism. The history of the origin and development of Saivism in India is an interesting study. It clearly, reveals the cultural unity of India from extreme north to extreme south from time immemorial. How the current of art and philosophy passed from the north to the south and *vice versa* is shown by the free exchange of books, and visits of saints and savants to Kashmir and from there to south India.

It was, for instance, as a result of the direct impact of Sankaracharya that the Kashmir Saivists transformed the older form of dualistic Saivism as prevailing in Kashmir before the revelation of *Siva-Sutras*, to that of the basic conception of the Vedanta. But South Indian Saivism itself traces its origin to Kashmir. It is known that Thirumular, one of the earliest teachers of Saivism in the South — he is placed some time between the first and the ninth centuries A.D. — came

from the land of the Pratyabhijna school that is Kashmir. It is also known that the Cholas of the 10th and 11th centuries A.D imported many Saiva teachers from the north to come and teach Saivism to their people. Recently several important manuscripts of works of famous Kashmirian Saiva philosophers in Sarada and some south Indian scripts have been found in Kerala and Madras.

“How much older Kashmir Saivism may have been in its origin, observes Dr. Nilakantha Sastri, “is not easy to determine. There are elements in common between the dogmatics of Kashmir Saivism and those of South Indian Saivism. Yet, in their philosophy, they differ perceptibly, the Kashmir school being idealistic and the South Indian pluralist in metaphysics. The historical relation between the two forms is not easy to decide, though the mention of Brahmins from Kashmir in south Indian inscriptions may lead one to infer that South Indian Saivism is also ultimately derived from Kashmir. Literary and epigraphic evidence from south India and Java and other Indian colonies of the East also connects the origin and spread of Saivism with the march of Agastya from the north to the south, and his further progress towards the Eastern lands.

Another illustration of the cultural unity of India from ancient times is furnished by the fact that in order to combat Saivism at its fountain head, Ramanuja (11th century A.D), the leader of the rival Vaisnava creed, travelled all the way from Madras to Kashmir, which continued to be the premier centre of Saivism, and to influence the religious and philosophic thought of India.

Diffusion of Sanskrit Learning

We have so far surveyed briefly the contribution of Kashmirian poets, dramatists, writers and philosophers to Sanskrit language and literature. This naturally presupposes an extensive study by them of the works on various subjects written by authors from the rest of India. The huge mass of Sanskrit manuscripts in the Devangari and Sarada scripts found all over the State in recent years, shows the extent of the scope and variety of Sanskrit texts and studies and their diffusion among the people. George Buhler who toured the State in search of Sanskrit manuscripts in 1875, found an incredibly large number of

works on Vedas, Puranas, Mahatmyas, Poetry, Plays and Fables, Poetics, Metrics, Grammar, Kosas, Law and Polity, Samkhya, Vedanta and Saiva Philosophy, Nyaya, Purva Mimansa, Astronomy, Astrology, Vaidya Sastra, etc. The discovery of manuscripts on such varied subjects left him amazed. "I must premise, he records, that I do not pretend to give all that is valuable in them. I have had no time to read several millions of *slokas* and to compare them with the verses known from Indian books. A thorough study of such a collection would take up the whole time of a student during several years, and I even doubt if any man can sufficiently become master of all the various *Sastras* represented, in order to estimate the books at their proper value."

Another feature of Sanskrit learning in Kashmir was the special and exclusive recensions of some famous and important classics, like the Mahabharata and Kalidasa's *Sakuntala*. Buhler's discovery, for instance, of the Kashmirian recension of the latter was a significant moment in the history of the controversy as to the original and authentic form of the text of the play. From a comparison of this text readings of which went back to the end of the 12th or to the beginning of the 13th century, with the then printed editions, it appeared that the Kashmirian version agreed neither with the Bengali redaction nor with the Devanagari. Pischel, however, gave his final verdict on the controversy in his posthumously published second edition of the play in the Harvard Oriental Series, in which he assesses the value of the Kashmir recension.

In the case of Mahabharata, the matter passed through a similar controversy. The Kashmirian recension discovered by Buhler was exhaustively made use of by the late Dr. Sukthankar who revealed the importance of that recension, to Ideologists in the February 1921, issue of the "Vividhajnariavistara" (Bombay), where the extent of the Adi Parva is quoted to bring home the conclusion that much reliance cannot be placed upon the current text of the Parva Sangraha figures of Adhyayas and Slokas.

Similarly with regard to the *Bhagavadgita* many Kashmiri pandits like Kesava, Vasugupta, Anandavardhana, Ramakantha, Bhaskara, Abhinavagupta and a number of others, wrote commentaries on it. The earliest of the known Kashmiri commentaries on this sacred book

of the Hindus, is that of Vasugupta, the founder of Kashmir Saivism. This commentary called *Vasvitika* is not extant. Only the first six chapters are perhaps still to be found incorporated in another Tika on the *Bhagavadgita*, called Lasaki by Rajanka Lasakaka, of which manuscripts are available.

The second of the known commentaries is by Anandavardhana. Next comes Ramakantha's commentary called the *Sarvatobadra*, which is a very extensive work. Besides these, Bhaskara is referred to by Abhinavagupta as having commented upon the Gita. Abhinavagupta himself is the author of still another commentary, which has been before modern scholars since 1912.

It was in 1930 that Dr. Schrader published a paper on the Kashmirian recension of the *Gita*, which evoked considerable interest among scholars. Almost all Kashmiri writers prior to the 12th century A.D refer to a text of the *Gita* which differs in its text from the vulgate adopted by Sankaracharya and later non-Kashmiri writers. The most important of such variations are the addition of certain verses and omission of a few others. This has given rise to a controversy which in the words of Kunhan Raja, "has assumed in the region of Indological studies an importance too big in dimension to be ignored by any serious student. The problem has come to stay."

Not only did the Kashmiri scholars comment upon classical works like those of Kalidasa, but they also studied, and wrote commentaries on, important works produced in Sanskrit. For instance the *Yudhisthiravijaya*, the premier 'kavya' of Vasudev Bhattatiri of distant Kerala was commented upon by Ranakantha of Kashmir.

No wonder the learned Pandits of Kashmir and their works were in demand at the courts of several enlightened princes in India, at important assemblies of thinkers and writers and at the Sanskrit Universities in the rest of India. And it was the ambition of every student and lover of Sanskrit language and literature and Indian philosophy to go to Kashmir to drink deep at the fountain of knowledge and wisdom that gushed forth from the "Land of Sarada, the Goddess of Learning."

Dance, Drama and Music

The cultivation of fine arts by the people of Kashmir has an ancient background. Some terracotta tiles of the fourth century A.D. excavated at Harwan depict a *danseuse* in a dance pose and other tiles show a female musician playing a *dholak*. We find several references to dance, drama and music in the pages of the *Rajatarangini*. It was, however, in the seventh and eighth centuries A.D. that these arts attained their full vigor. In fact no student of classical Indian Dance can ignore or by pass the commentaries on Bharata's *Natya-Sastra*, and original works on Dance, like those of Udbhatta, Lollapaia, Sankuka, Bhatta Nayaka, and the last but greatest of them all, Abhinavagupta. The Tandava of Siva is described in *Harvijayakavya* by Rajanaka Ratnakara.

The finer traditions in music and dance have, however, been preserved in India by the hereditary professional artistes who passed them down from generation to generation. But unfortunately, the history of Kashmir after the 11th century A.D. is written in civil wars, invasions, repressions and bloodshed, intermittently filled in with sad accounts of famines, fires and epidemics. No wonder the traditions in music and dance vanished and what has been left is only a poor specimen of their former glory.

As elsewhere in India, classical dancing in Kashmir also had a religious background, the temple dancers having played a significant role in its development. The first reference to dancing in the *Rajatarangini* is about king Jalauka, the son and successor of the emperor Asoka, who is credited with being an ardent worshipper of Siva and a lover of music and dance. While worshipping at the shrine of Siva, "a hundred among the ladies of the seraglio who had risen to dance, in honour of the god, at the time fixed for dancing and singing, he gave out of joy to Jyestharudra" Another king, Pratapaditya II, who had fallen in love with the wife of a rich merchant, but whom he could not marry in the lifetime of her husband, was induced by the latter "to accept her from a temple as a dancing girl put there by her husband on account of her skill in dancing."

It appears from another passage in the *Chronicles* that dancing in temples was a hereditary calling with certain families. While out in

the jungle, Lalitaditya is recorded to have noticed two beautiful damsels dancing gracefully to the accompaniment of a drum and other musical instruments. On being questioned as to the purpose of their dancing in the jungle, they declared: "We come from a family of professional dancers and we live in the village yonder. By the direction of our mothers who got their living here, we perform at this spot the dancing, which our descent makes incumbent. This custom handed down by tradition, has become fixed in our family." Lalitaditya had the site excavated and, to his amazement, found a large temple containing two beautiful images of Siva and Visnu, which he installed in two temples in his new city of Parihaspura.

That this profession was not looked down upon is apparent from another passage wherein it is mentioned that king Chakravarman married two professional dancing girls, sisters Hamsi and Nagalata and although they belonged to a lower caste, he made Hamsi his first queen who "enjoyed among the king's wives the privilege of being fanned with the Chowries."²⁶⁹ Similarly Utkarsa (1089 A.D) married Sahaja a dancing girl belonging to a temple, whom "he had seen on the dancing-stage."²⁷⁰ Another king Uccala, married a dancing girl named Jayamati who became later his chief queen.²⁷¹ King Harsa personally taught dancing girls how to act and dance.²⁷²

A study of the sculptures and relief's on the walls and columns of old temples reveals figures of dancers with ornaments and graceful styles of hair dressing. It appears that classical Indian dancing as systematised by Bharata was in vogue in Kashmir, and was assiduously studied and practised by the artistes. Jayapida, for instance, is known to have been "acquainted with this Sastra" and could therefore relish the dance performance of a "Gauda (Bengal) artiste, named Kamla, who performed in the temple of Kartikeya.

It was, however, in the 11th century A.D that king Kalasa introduced ballet dancing and choral music, which became popular. But classical dancing continued to hold its ground even after the Hindu rule came to an end in the 14th century A.D. We have, for instance, a graphic description of classical dance performance at the court of King Zain-ul-abidin, from the pen of Srivara. There is a reference to the Tandava dance of Siva in several verses of the

Rajatarangini. The Tandava represents the five activities (*Panchaurya*), namely creation, preservation, incarnation, destruction and deliverance, and well represented the mood and attitude of kings and people of Kashmir in the days of the later Hindu rulers. Dance performances were invariably accompanied by music played on lutes, flutes, Hudduka or bag-pipe, and drums.

It appears that dance and dramatic performances were generally given in temples for both the common people and the nobility. The kings had their own troupe of performers and a permanent theatre (*natyamandapa*) was a feature of palace and temple architecture. We also learn that there were theatres with leather-cushioned seats.

Side by side with the classical music and dance there seems to have existed also folk dancing and music, performances of which were held in the open. From a passage in the *Rajatarangini* we learn that these were at the mercy of the weather and the audience would disperse pell-mell when caught in a rainstorm.

Drama also seems to have flourished in ancient Kashmir, along with dance. As already noted, Kashmirian authors wrote a number of dramas, which it seems were staged by professional artistes. References to theatrical performances, the stage and strolling players are common in the *Rajatarangini*.²⁷⁸ The stage was at an elevated position, lighted up with multi coloured lamps. The players would dress appropriately and used yellow orpiment and other emollients and colours for their make-up. The comic parts were played with great effect, and generally depicted the life of a rapacious Kayastha or a newly-rich Damara. Apart from earnings by their performances, the strolling players received customary gifts from the king and nobles on festivals and fairs.

Music was cultivated as a fine art by both the king and the commoner. The *Rajatarangini* supplies several clues to the development of music in ancient Kashmir. We are, for instance, told that music was played in Buddhist *viharas* in the time of Jalauka, son of Asoka. The king was himself a lover of music and maintained a troupe of dancing girls and musicians. At the Hindu sacred shrines and in temples, music was played to the accompaniment of big drums, cymbals, etc. At several religious ceremonies, particularly connected with Tantric worship, music was a must. Mamma a blind musician was, for instance,

specially employed by the superintendent of a *matha* to play at the time of Tantric worship.

The kings, however, were the patrons of music and invariably listened to songs and the music of the lute and the flute at bedtime. Some of them were great adepts in this art. King Kalasa created a taste among the Kashmiris for light operatic songs (*upanga-gita*). His son, "Harsa, amusing his father in public with songs as if he were a singer, kept up his establishment with the presents the former gave him."²⁸⁴ He also gave music lessons to several courtiers, among whom was Kanaka, the uncle of our historian Kalhana. He was a great connoisseur of music and "to one named Bhimanayaka, who could play charming music, he gave when pleased with his performance on a drum, an elephant together with a female elephant."

We are, however, given a sordid picture of the life of professional musicians of the time particularly those who supplied instrumental music to the singer or the dancer. They are depicted as addicted to keeping late hours, eating much meat and drinking incessantly. Perhaps it was a later development, result no doubt of the general laxity in morals among kings and courtiers.

From a critical study of *the Rajatarangini* we find that the premier musical instruments were the lute, flute and the drum. Classical music was played on these. Besides, there is a mention of Hudukka, which may be compared to a bag-pipe. In the temples music was accompanied by the big drum conch and cymbals.

Side by side with classical music, a kind of folk music also existed in ancient Kashmir. *Chhakri*, which is so popular these days, can be traced to the time of Kalhana (12th century A.D) and even earlier. We are told that Bhiksacara who occupied the throne for a few months indulged in "playing music on earthen pots, brass vessels and other such instruments. There would be dancing and singing with pantomimic movements of the head, hands and feet.

Painting

With exquisite natural scenery all around them, Kashmiris as may well be expected developed an artistic eye as also a mode of expression of their aesthetic qualities, which distinguished their art

and architecture. The distinct school of architecture which is depicted in the large number of ruins of old stone temples dotting the Valley, has received due recognition from art critics and connoisseurs. But the allied art of painting practised through the centuries, has escaped attention. Several factors are responsible for it. In the first place a large number of old and beautiful paintings and book illustrations were taken away by European collectors towards the end of the last and the beginning of the present century, and whatever little remained was in the possession of people most of whom were ignorant of their value as treasures of art.

Besides, the non-existence of mural paintings either in the old stone temples or the medieval mosques, has left a gap in the history of painting in Kashmir, for, frescoes have long been associated with the development of Indian art. The ancient architect seems to have laid greater emphasis on sculpture than on painting to decorate his creation, obviously because he worked in stone and believed in its longer life and permanency.

But Kashmiris had a deep love for painting. In his inimitable work, *Kuttanimata-Kavya*, Damodargupta mentions that painting was one of the subjects, which women of Kashmir had to learn and cultivate in their youth. It is evident from the several customs and ceremonies which are observed from time immemorial, that painting in Kashmir has ancient traditions. For example, on Gauri-tritya (third of the bright fortnight of Magha) every boy and girl in a Kashmiri Pandit family receives from the priest bright-coloured paintings of gods and goddesses as well as of flowers and animals. On Asarh-saftami (seventh of the bright fortnight of Asarh) every Hindu house is decorated with mural drawings and paintings of the rising sun. During marriage and Yagnopavit ceremonies, the doors and windows are painted bright with floral designs and drawings.

Circumstantial information regarding a distinct school of painting previous to Mughal times is supplied by Taranath, a Tibetan Lama, who wrote a history of Buddhism in 1608 A.D. After a rather vague and legendary account of ancient artists and their works, he gives some precise details: "Later, in the days of Buddha-paksa (the identity of this monarch is uncertain) the sculpture and painting of the artist

Bimbisara were especially wonderful, and resembled the works of early gods. The number of his followers was exceedingly great, and as he was born in Magadha, the artists of this school were called Madyadesa artists. In the time of King Sila (Probably the celebrated Harsavardhana Siladitya, 606-647 A.D.), there lived an especially skilful delineator of the gods born in Marwar, named Sringadhara; he left behind him paintings and other masterpieces like those produced by Yakasa. Those who followed his lead were called the old Western School."

After giving an account of the extension of the influence of the Western School to Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Nepal, Taranath proceeds to give some information regarding the Kashmir School: "In Kashmir, too, there were in former times followers of the old western School of Madhyadesa; later on a certain Hasuraya founded a new school of painting and sculpture, which is called the Kashmir School."

Being the home of Mahayana Buddhism, Kashmiri painters and sculptors carried their art traditions even further north, to Central Asia and China. The aim of the Buddhist artist was to visualize the ideals of his creed: to illustrate by pictorial parables all the beautiful sentiments of his religion. These were designed to appeal to the higher feelings of the spectator. What the political vicissitudes and the natural calamities obliterated in Kashmir, remained preserved in the caves and cities buried under the sands of Central Asia. "Kashmir murals", writes Dr. Goetz, "we know only from places outside the Valley: the earlier style in the part of the 'Gandharan' murals in Ming Oi (Kucha) in the northern Tarim Basin, the later, in the frescoes of Mannan and of the 'Red Temple' at Tsaparang in Western Tibet; and illustrated manuscripts have turned up in Tibet. The style of the 'School of Hasuraya' has more vitality than the Bengal miniatures but a harder line, and brighter, but rather cold colours."²²²

Kashmiris appear to have been adepts at painting designs on dress material also, which looked so real that when king Harsa's palace was looted after his defeat at the hands of rebel forces, "some low-caste people eager to get gold, burned clothes which were painted with gold, and then anxiously searched the ashes."²²³

Sculpture

Kashmir has, however, still preserved some good specimens of sculpture and it is not difficult to reconstruct a succinct history of the development of plastic art. Very little has, however, survived of the Kashmiri art of the centuries before the Christian era. At Harwan Buddhist ruins have been excavated, but they are not of earlier than the fourth century AD.

The moulded brick tiles unearthed at Harwan depict a unique art trend, in that they do not deal with religious, but with secular themes. We find life and nature as the artist found around him. There are figures of men wearing Central Asian costumes; and curiously enough the relief figures of Parthian horsemen, women, heads and busts appear side by side with early Gupta motifs.²²⁴

The mouldings on Harwan terracotta tiles cannot, however, be the work of folk-artists. The art seems to have attained a high degree of sophistication and the moulded tiles depict life of the upper class, in as much as we find figures of hunting horsemen, men and women sitting on a balcony and enjoying perhaps the beautiful landscape and listening to music from female musicians and recitals of dancers. The physiognomy of the persons depicted on these tiles leaves no doubt of their Central Asian origin — their prominent cheek bones, small eyes, receding forehead and heavy features, all point to the same conclusion. From some letters in the Khrothi script which went into disuse before the fourth century A.D. And also from a small passage on Buddhist creed written in the Brahmi character, it seems the tiles belong to the third-fourth century A.D.

Whereas the Harwan tiles are flat, hardly rising out of the background, and are made from a mould and therefore repetitive, the terracotta heads and reliefs found at Ushkur are each a single masterpiece produced from moulds carved by hand.

These "later Gandhara" terracottas have been variously put from the fourth to the eighth centuries A.D. The figurines depict true Hellenistic influence. Hellenistic art was the dominant cultural force for about a thousand years from the 3rd century BC to 700 A.D. in what is now called Afghanistan, and its final echoes lasted in Kashmir until the tenth century A.D.

Relics similar to Ushkur have recently been unearthed at Akhnur. Situated on the right bank of the Chenab, where the river first enters the plains of the Punjab, Akhnur lay in ancient times on the route between Jammu and Srinagar via the Budil Pass, as well as on the road to Rajauri (ancient Rajapuri). It was thus an important center of trade and commerce and the headquarters of a flourishing timber industry. Both in treatment and the material used in the lovely terracotta heads with their sombre lines and the serene and peaceful poses, we notice a close affinity to the "Later Gandhara School" on the one hand and to the Gupta art on the other. The fragments collected both at Ushkur and Akhnur consist of pieces of bodies, covered with drapery or partly covered, or even nude; broken bodies of princes, princesses, attendants, holy men, Buddhist mendicants in their drape robes; elaborate decorations that once might have been personal ornaments, such as crowns, necklaces, armlets, bracelets, earrings, and the like; architectural fragments of a highly ornamental style, including pillar capitals with vine ornaments, volutes, etc.

Stylistically they seem to inherit two different aesthetics: the mongrel Indo Roman school of Gandhara as testified by the treatment of the hair, head dresses and jewellery, as well as the diminutive sizes, while a prominent nose and the heavy fleshy cheeks with almond-eyes seem to indicate the influence of Kusan and Gupta-Mathura art.

The figure sculpture during the Karkota rule was affected by two waves of art — from Central Asia and from Mathura. As the *Stupa* of Chankuna (Lalitaditya's minister of Chinese descent) at Parihaspura shows, there are T'ang Chinese models found in the Bodhisatva statues there. But then the king's Indian expeditions resulted in a considerable influx of sculptors trained in the late Gupta tradition. There must have been a surplus of sculptors in Central India then because in those years Indian prosperity was dwindling. Whether they came voluntarily or were forced to come by Lalitaditya, we cannot ascertain. But in any case we find at Martand relief's in the best late Gupta style around the plinth of the great central shrine, and likewise on those of the subsidiary temples flanking it on both sides. "They are very elegant, mannered, somewhat sensuous, fashionable, often even sophisticated. Their costume, on the other hand, generally goes back to Gandhara

and Sassanian fashions, which then must still have prevailed in Kashmir."²²⁵

But most of the sculptures found on the walls, on the entrance to the temple and on staircases, depicting the Sun-god, goddesses, or King Lalitaditya with his queens and priests, are the work of local artists, trained no doubt by the late Gupta master. Their modelling is no doubt less sensitive, and more static, but instead they have a vitality and strength, which for the next 200 years was the hallmark of Kashmir sculpture. "Also ichnographically they are interesting; for they have preserved quite a number of types which otherwise are rare in India but which are well known to us from Burma, Indonesia, Cambodia and Champa as imports from India — e.g., many 'Tantric' types, or Vishnu riding on Garuda, etc."²²⁶

Sculptural art of distinct Kashmirian characteristics — a real synthesis of the influences from Gandhara and Gupta schools plus the elegance in details and symmetrical proportions in body and look stamped by the Kashmirian artists — reached its apogee under the rule of the Utpala dynasty. The four-headed Vishnu, heavily ornamented and clad in *dhōti* with a dagger attached to the jeweled girdle at the waist, is the most popular figure of the period. The powerful frame of the body exhibits vigour and discipline and the emotional expression of the face is in sharp contrast to the passionless, calm features of the Buddha and Bbhdhisatvas of the sculptures found at Pandrenthan and Parihaspura. Other sculptures too, for example, Kamadeva seated between his consorts, Rati and Priti, Krisna amid his Gopis, Ganga, Yamuna, Trimurti, Ardhanareeswara, Ganesa and Laksmi, icons so much varied, reveal the same innate emotion, depth of feeling and above all vigour.

Architecture

"Of all the arts," observes Percy Brown, "practised by the people of the Valley in the pre-Islamic period, the building art was one in which they were notably proficient as the remains of their large monuments in stone are a standing proof." That the style which culminated in such masterpieces of architecture as Martand and Avantipura, must have had a long history of development, goes with

out saying. And that it was a product of influences from different classical schools is evident from the trefoil and the horseshoe arches, and from the fluted pillars.

Buddhist Style

An attempt has been made to link the beginnings of the architectural trends in Kashmir to the Buddhist *stupas* and chaityas, foundations of which were recently excavated at Harwan and Ushkur. This, however, poses an inexplicable problem, as only a century or two later, to the date assigned to these ruins (third-fourth century A.D) we notice some vastly superior masterpieces coming up, without any evidence of a steady growth. Further, in the face of Kalhana's references to foundations made by kings and queens long before the date of Harwan and Ushkur, such a hypothesis is apparently vague and incomprehensible.

For, we have a definite assertion in the Rajatarangini that Asoka founded the city of Srinagar and also a Buddhist settlement in the Valley at Sukseletra. No traces of Asoka's city are now left, but we have a glimpse of its grandeur in the account of Heun Tsiang who refers to it as the 'old capital'. It is, therefore, not improbable that the stone architecture as depicted in the monuments still extant, had a much earlier tradition than is supposed by these art historians, and had very little relation with, and developed independent of, the influence of, the foundations at Harwan and Ushkur. These latter seem to have been solitary specimens of the Buddhist settlements of a later period, when Gandhara having lost much of its importance as a stronghold of Buddhism, no longer appealed to monks and preachers who migrated in numbers to a more hospitable land in Kashmir.

At Harwan, the excavations have revealed the foundation of a monastic establishment with a *stupa* and a chaitya, corresponding in every particular to the *stupa* courts at Gandhara. The *stupa* was square in plan with its base in three tiers and approached by a flight of steps on its western side, the whole being contained within an open quadrangle. The *chaitya* or temple occupied a more prominent position and had a hall with an apsidal end, "a distinctive form of Buddhist temple common in rock architecture of the more southerly parts of

India, but rarely found elsewhere."²²⁷

More interesting than the plan of the foundations is the manner and method of building adopted. Three methods have been disclosed: the earliest consisting of embedded quantities of pebbles in mud mortar, "diaper pebble" masonry where the pebble wall is reinforced by the insertion at intervals of irregular stone; "diaper rubble" resembling in some respects rubble masonry, the walls being composed of large untrimmed stones with the spaces between filled by smaller ones.

Aryan Order of Architecture

It is, however, the stone architecture of Kashmir temples dotting the Valley that at once attracts the attention of every tourist and archaeologist. Cunningham who made the first on-the-spot study of these ruins calls their style of architecture the "Aryan Order" This name it fully merits, for it is as much a distinct order of architecture as any one of the more celebrated classic orders.

The characteristic features of the Kashmirian architecture are its lofty pyramidal roofs, its trefoiled doorways, covered by pyramidal pediments, and the great width of its intercolumniations. That it had been influenced by Greek and Roman styles is evidenced by the close resemblance which the Kashmirian columned bears to the classical peristyle of Greece. At the same time the echinos, which is the leading feature of the Kashmirian capital, is also the chief member of the Doric capital. It seems that the Kashmiri architects borrowed the style from the Indo-Greeks, during the time of their control of the Kabul Valley and Western Punjab.

The superiority of the Kashmirian architecture seems to have been known all over India, for one of the names for the people of Kashmir is *Sastra-Silpina*, "architects," a term which could only have been applied to them on account of their well-known skill in building. One wonders how in those ancient days massive stones were lifted and laid in position with great precision on the heights of the temples. But Kashmiris appear to have known the science and laws of Law of mechanics then, as they used *yantras* or machines, in lifting up enormously bulky and heavy stones.²²⁸

It is beyond the scope of the present work to give a detailed description of all the old temple ruins in Kashmir. But to follow their architectural development, however it is accessory to note the outstanding features of a few typical ones. Perhaps the earliest specimens of this order of architecture are the temple on the Sankaracharya hill in Srinagar; the ruins at Loduv and the Pravaresa temple, now known as Baha-ud-din Sahib, at the foot of the Hari Parbat hill.

Sankaracharya Temple

The most conspicuous monument that attracts the attention of a visitor on reaching Srinagar, is the ancient temple on the crest of the Sankaracharya hill standing 305 metres above the plain. This temple rests on a solid rock and consists of an octagonal basement of 13 layers of stone 20 feet high, on which is supported a square building. On each of the four sides are two projections which terminate in pediment and a gable, the latter intersecting the main roof half way up its slope.

The body of the temple is surrounded by a terrace enclosed by a stone wall or parapet $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. This in following the outline of the basement, preserves its octagonal shape. The terrace surrounding the temple is reached by three flights of stone steps, numbering respectively 6, 7 and 18, the last being encased between two walls. From the terrace another flight of 10 steps leads to the door of the temple. The interior is a chamber, circular in plan, with a basin containing a *lingam*. Its general shape is that of a cone, with four sides formed by the rectangular adjustment of eight gable-shaped slabs of masonry. The cone, which is about 25 feet in height, with a proportionate base, rests upon an octagonal raised platform which is about 5 feet above the terrace. The circumference of the platform is about 100 feet. The interior of the temple is 14 feet in diameter: the ceiling is flat and 11 feet high; the walls which are 7 feet thick, are covered with white plaster composed of gypsum, and the roof is supported by four octagonal limestone pillars. The whole of the building is of stone, which is laid throughout in horizontal courses, no cement appearing to have been used.

It appears from a reference in the *Rajatarangini* that this religious edifice on a commanding site, was first built by Jalauka, the son of the

great emperor Asoka, about 200 B.C. The temple was subsequently rebuilt and dedicated to Jyesthesvara by Gopaditya who reigned from 253 to 328 A.D. The hill was known as Gopadri and the village at its foot on the south is still called Gopkar. To this date may be ascribed the low enclosing wall and the plinth of the existing temple, but all the superstructure is evidently of a later date.

The temple shows the early Kashmiri style in a still experimental and simple stage. It tries to introduce the early Sikhara style and has still a one-storeyed gable pediment which is evident even now, despite the later reconstruction. Here also we find the early specimen of the horseshoe arch, prominent in the final stages of this architecture, as for example in Martand.

Temple at Loduv

The temple of Rudresa at Loduv about 3.2 kilometres on the road leading from Pampore to Avantipura, closely copies the structures of Gandhara in plan and broad details. It has a close resemblance to the old temple at Guniyar in the Swat valley. There is, however, a striking difference in the architectural design of Loduv and the temple at Guniyar. Whereas in the latter the barrenness of the cells is relieved internally by four recesses placed diagonally, at Loduv the row of projecting brackets which support the eaves of the roof are replaced by a simple cornice consisting of three courses of projecting filleted blocks. Here we notice the first impression of a dome. This and the simplicity of construction and absence of any internal or plastic decoration, indicate its early age.

The ground plan of the main temple is a square of 24 feet. There is only one doorway to the W.S-W. Its head is semi-circular, with a pyramidal pediment slightly projected and divided into two portions, of which the upper one is plain and the other is occupied by a semi-circular ornament. The apex of the pediment reaches the top of the cornice which runs round the top of the walls on the outside. The roof is entirely gone.

The interior is a circle, the diameter of which diminishes from the ground upwards. The wall on the inside shows signs of fire having been used perhaps to destroy the roof which may have been of wood.

The top of the doorway inside is formed by the under side of the course from which the cornice of the interior is projected

The basement of the temple stands on a platform 48 feet square, faced with stone walls forming a sort of lower basement. The whole stands in the northeast corner. There is an ancient looking *lingam* of dark limestone, $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, $1\frac{1}{4}$ feet in diameter with eight flat faces, standing in the water near the springs which supply the tank. The smaller of the Loduv temples stands a little above and behind the first. Its ground plan is a square of 10 feet. It has only one door-way to the west with a square top covered by a pediment, which rests upon the jambs of the door.

Pravaresa and Narasthan

More important, though less spectacular, are the ruins of the temple of Pravaresa which Stein identifies with the enclosure of the cemetery of Baha-ud-din; and of the Ranaswamin temple (Ziarat of Pir Haji Muhammad) in Srinagar. These ruins, which according to Kalhana go back to the sixth century A.D, show that the medieval Kashmir temple type with its vast court with an enclosure of chapels must have developed already though still in a very crude form. The peristyle had cellas without arches, the doors being simply covered with plain lintels. On the other hand, the corner chapels of the front facade which are so characteristic of Martand, Avantipura and Buniar can be traced here.

This is elaborated further in the construction plans of the temple at Narasthan about 16 kilometres north-east of Avantipura. The date of this temple is uncertain, but it definitely belongs to the group described earlier, with the addition of an enclosure wall and imposing gateways — a feature which finds its culmination in the plans of the magnificent Sun temple at Martand.

The situation is very picturesque, looking down the narrow valley while behind it the ground slopes up towards the lofty mountains of the Briarigan range. The temple stands in a walled enclosure about 65 feet square. The main entrance is on the west through an imposing portico; the outer portal is arched, the pediment possessing the usual characteristics of the Aryan order of architecture. The outer vestibule

measures 8 feet by 4 feet; in the middle is a square gateway opening into a second vestibule of rather larger dimensions.

The temple, which occupies the centre of the enclosure, is in general appearance similar to that of Loduv, but more imposing in its proportions and elaborate in details. Each side measures 15 feet above the plinth. The porch, which is on the west, projects rather more than three feet from the face of the wall.

The inner entrance is a square gateway 6 feet high by 3 feet wide supported by pillars. Both this and the middle gateway of the north seem to have been fitted with stone doors. The inside chamber is 8 feet square; the walls are blank, with the exception of a small arched recess on the south side of the entrance. The flooring is of stone which has given way in the centre, where probably the image of Visnu stood. About 8 feet from the ground there is a cornice, from which the roof seems to have tapered to a point, the walls are now standing to a height of 24 feet and the pinnacle was probably built about 10 feet higher.

Lalitaditya's Foundations

The real patron and to some extent the founder of the sophisticated Aryan Style of Kashmir architecture was Lalitaditya who built the new city of Parihaspura with the imposing temples and chaityas, the famous sun-temple of Martand and the smaller but picturesque temples of Wangat and possibly some temples in the Punjab at Kallar, Ketas and Kafirkot (Bilot). In his constructions we notice a transformation achieved by the absorption of many new inspirations, ideas and techniques from the more developed civilisations in India and countries to her north and west. Like so many empire builders, Lalitaditya took artists from wherever he could obtain them and tried to mould different styles and techniques into a new imperial art bearing the impress of his own personality.

His principal minister, Cankuna, erected the great stupa at Parihaspura and other stupas at Pandrenthan, decorated with sculptures in the Wei and T'ang Chinese art. The great chaitya of his of which the foundations have been unearthed, follows the Gandhara style of architecture in its plan, and Kalhana records the installation in it of a huge Buddha image, modelled perhaps on the Bamiyan Colossus.

The ruins of the two famous temples of Parihasakesava and Muktakesava at Parihaspura show vast enclosed courts, surrounded by chapels bigger in scale than the ones at Narasthan — a plan on which the temple at Martand was also built.

Martand

Martand, the most impressive and grandest of all the ancient temples, occupies undoubtedly the finest situation in Kashmir. This noble ruin is the most striking in size and position of all the existing remains. The temple itself is not more than 40 feet high, but its solid walls and bold outlines, towering over the fluted pillars of the surrounding colonnade, give it an imposing appearance. There are no petty confused details, but all are distinct and massive and most admirable suited to the general character of the building. The mass of buildings consist of one lofty central edifice with a small detached wing on each side of the entrance, the whole standing in a large quadrangle, surrounded by a colonnade of fluted pillars with intervening trefoil headed recesses. The length of the outer side of the wall which is blank, is about 90 yards, that of the front is about 60 yards. There are in all 85 columns, a singularly appropriate number in a temple of the Sun, if, as is supposed, the number 84 is accounted sacred by the Hindus in consequence of its being the product of the number of days in the week and the number of signs in Zodiac.

The remains of three gateways opening into the court are now standing. The principal of these fronts due west — towards Anantang. It is also rectangular in shape and built with enormous blocks of lime-stone, 6 or 8 feet in length and one of 9 feet and of proportionate solidity, cemented with mortar. It is surprising how these huge stones were piled one upon the other to a great height with such exactitude. The central building is the most imposing structure and above all has (as the temples in Kashmir possess) in addition to the cella or sanctuary, a nave 18 feet square. The sanctuary alone is left entirely bare, the two other compartments being lined with rich panelings and sculptured niches: It has been conjectured that the roof was of pyramidal form and that the entrance chamber and wings were similarly carved. There would thus have been four distinct pyramids of which that over the

inner chamber must have been the loftiest, the height of its pinnacle above the ground being about 75 feet.

The temple is 60 feet long and 38 feet wide, its height, when complete must have been 75 feet, the courtyard that surrounds and encloses the temple, is a more remarkable object than the temple itself. Its internal dimensions are 220 by 142 feet. On each face is a central cella, larger and higher than the colonnade in which it is placed. The height is 30 feet and the pillars on each side are 9 feet high — not lofty but they have a Grecian aspect which is interesting. It is thought that the whole of the interior of the quadrangle was originally filled with water to a level up to one foot of the base of the columns and that access to the temple was gained by a raised pathway of slabs supported on solid blocks at short intervals which connected the gateway flight of steps with that leading to the temple. The same kind of pathway stretched right across of quadrangle from one side doorway to the other. A constant supply of fresh water was kept up through a canal front the river Lidar, which was conducted along the side of the mountain for the service of the village close by.

Bates says that the interior must have been as imposing as the exterior. On ascending the flight of steps now covered by the ruins, the votary of the Sun entered a highly decorated chamber with a door-way on each side covered by a pediment with a trefoil-headed niche containing a bust of the Hindu triad. On the flanks of the main entrance as well as those of the side doorways were trefoil niches, each of which held a deity. The interior decorations of the roof can only be conjecturally determined, as there do not appear to be any ornamented stones that could, with certainty, be assigned to it.

Cunningham thinks that the erection of this Sun temple was suggested by the magnificent sunny prospect which its position commands. He remarks — "It overlooks the finest view in Kashmir, and perhaps in the known world Beneath it lies the 'Paradise of the East', with its sacred streams and glens, its orchards and green fields, surrounded on all sides by vast snowy mountains whose lofty peaks seem to smile upon the beautiful valley below. The vast extent of the scene makes it sublime, for this magnificent view of Kashmir is no pretty peer in a half-mile glen, but the full display of a valley 30 miles

in breadth and 84 miles in length, the whole of which lies beneath the can of the wonderful Maitand."

What is most impressive in Martand is the apparently overwhelming size — to some degree an optic illusion — and the complete harmony of the buildings and of all their decorations and figure sculptures. As we have already seen they represent the conclusion of a Jong development from the simple start depicted by the temples of Sankarcharya and Pravaresa, through the Parihaspura *stupas* and temples to the very zenith of Martand.

"On the other hand", records Dr. Goetz, "Martand stands not quite isolated. It has a smaller counterpart in the plains, the temple of Malot in the Salt Range. Malot raises the problems of the Martand temple even more acutely. For it has a facade of purely Roman-Corinthian half-pillars enclosing trifoliated archways crowned by a set of high *Sikharas*. If the first has already been proved characteristic for Lalitaditya's reign, the second was possible only in a time of the closest contact with Bihar and Bengal — *i.e.* when the king of Gauda had become Lalitaditya's vassal and prisoner."

Martand has also quite a following of temples of the same layout and construction, though of simple execution, as for example Wangat and Buniar, which must belong to the same period.

Wangat Temples

Wangat in the Sindh valley is the site of some ruined temples near the spring called Naran Nag, at the foot of the Bhutser or Bhutesvara spur of the Haramukh peak. They are in two groups, situated at a distance of about 100 yards from each other.

One group consists of six buildings, all more or less ruined. The remains of an enclosing wall, measuring 176 feet by 130 feet, may still be traced, although there is no evidence of the form it originally had. The largest temple of the group measures 24 feet square and has a projection on each of its four sides, measuring 3 feet by 15 1/2 feet. The main block is surmounted by a pyramidal roof of rubble, formerly, no doubt, faced with stone; and the gables which terminated the porch-like projections on all four sides, can still be traced. There are two entrances facing east and west. Not far from the group is a

platform, rectangular in shape (100 feet by 67 feet) which appears to have been the basement of some building or temple. A colonnade once existed all round it — numerous bases of pillars are to be seen in their places on one of the longer sides of the rectangle, and several fragments of fluted columns are lying about, their average diameter being 2 feet. Its chief features are the size of the structural units and the resultant largeness of its parts, inspired by the great scale of the natural surroundings.

About 20 yards to the north-east of the platform are the ruins of the second group of temples, 11 in number, with the remains of a gateway in the centre about 22 feet wide, similar to that belonging to the first group. The principal one among them is 25 feet square with projections on each face.

The chief peculiarities of these ruins are the number of temples contained within the same enclosing wall, and the absence of symmetry in their arrangement. In antiquity some of the ruins are supposed to rank next to the Sankaracharya temple. Major Cole assigned their age to about the commencement of the Christian era. Lalitaditya built a temple for Siva-Jyesthesa which Stein thinks is the principal shrine in the western group.

Avantipura Temples

The architectural trends of the Karkota period reached a logical culmination in the next generation under the Utpalas. The two temples of Avantisvamin and Avantesvara, ruins of which are still extant, adorned the city of Avantipura built on a commanding site overlooking a bend in the river Jhelum, 29 kilometres south-east of Srinagar.

Both these temples are now shapeless mass of ruins, but the gateways of both are standing and the colonnade of the smaller temple, which had been completely buried under ground, has been excavated. The style corresponds with that of the Martand quadrangle, but the semi-attached pillars of the arched recesses are enriched with elaborate carving of very varied character, while the large detached columns are somewhat less elegantly proportioned.

We find in these temples and the one built by Samkaravarman at Parian, "an increased refinement of form, a more polished effect

generally, evidently a reflection of that riper cultural atmosphere which prevailed during the reign of Avantivarman."

After the temples belonging to the period of the Utpala rulers not much of note remains of the Kashmir style of architecture. A few temples notable those of Buniar and Uri on the Jhelum valley road depict the same stereotyped and ossified features. The temple at Buniar is in a most perfect condition in the Valley and owes its escape from destruction to its remote situation.

Pandrenthan

By the beginning of the tenth century the growth of the style had come to an end, as owing largely to political circumstances, temple building received little encouragement after that date. Small shrines continued to be built, and in them there are some features showing progress of the style in details. A perfect example is that of the small temple at Pandrenthan, 5 kilometers to the south of Srinagar, built by Meruvardhana in the middle of the tenth century A.D. Built in an artificial tank 40 yards square, the temple is a perfect type of the later development and the most modern example of the true Kashmiri style extant. It is 18 feet square with a projecting portico on each side and displays a confused exuberance of decoration, more especially the repetition of pediment within trefoil. The domed roof is well worth inspection, being covered with sculptures of classic design.

There are several other shrines, some much smaller than Pandren than and some monolithic such as at Payar, Mammal, Kother and Bumzu, which illustrate the decline of the style.

Temples in Jammu

The Kashmirian style of architecture spread out of the Valley to the Punjab Himalayas, particularly to Jammu principalities, Kangra and Chamba. We have typical examples in the temple ruins in Babor, and Billavar (ancient Vallapura) in Jammu. Babor about 35 kilometres from Jammu city has been identified with Babbapura of the *Rajatarangini* and was the ancient capital of the Dogras. The principal remains are a group of seven temples. An inscription in Sarada script

reveals that these temples were built in the 11th century A.D. The main temple is of "great solidity and considerable beauty; the chief feature being a hall whose roof was held up by eight fluted columns supporting beams of stone ten feet in length." The whole mass of stone was ornamented with carving.

The decorative features of the Kashmir temples and their Indo Aryan style is quite apparent in these ruins, which "incidentally gives additional corroboration to the impression one derives from reading Kalhana's account of these centuries (800 to 1150 A.D.) that there must have been considerable political and economic intercourse between the Kashmir Valley and these sub-mountain tracts."

Billavar, about 104.5 kilometres from Jammu, is the site of a fine medieval temple known as Billavakesvara. Its "spire is profusely ornamented externally, the ornament consisting mainly of floral scrolls, flower and vase decoration and niches with stepped pedimental roofs filled with decorative lozenges and figures of gods." The temple dates back to the 11th century A.D.

Cultural Unity of India

Nothing perhaps brings out in bolder relief the picture of the unity of India from time immemorial than the cultural fabric of ancient Kashmir. Despite its geographical isolation we find this small kingdom playing a prominent role in enriching the cultural life which pulsed throughout the length and breadth of India. For, it was early in its history that the Valley was settled by the Indo Aryan immigrants from the plains of the Punjab, and having inherited the Vedic art and culture they developed it to a remarkable degree.

The first historical figure that we come across in the *Rajatarangini* is Asoka who brought the Valley and the neighboring territory into his vast empire. He personally visited this beautiful land bringing with him Buddhist missionaries to preach the doctrine of the Buddha. This had a profound effect on the cultural life of the country, as Kashmir thenceforth became the fountain head of Mahayana and an advance post of Indian culture. From there went forth in the time of Kaniska and after, a number of missionaries to distant regions of central Asia and China who carried the Doctrine of the Buddha to

those countries. This further forged the links with the art and the cultural centres in the rest of India. For, apart from becoming politically a part of the country under Kaniska, several Buddhist scholars and acharyas' made the Valley the headquarters of their activities. Among these were the celebrated Nagarjuna, Asvagosh, Vasubandhu, Dharmatrata, and a host of others. Similarly Kashmirian Buddhist scholars adorned the Vikramasila and Nalanda Universities.

A further bond of unity was the systematic study and cultivation of the Sanskrit language. In fact all the literature produced in Kashmir on Buddhism was in Sanskrit. We have already surveyed the enormous contribution of Kashmir to Sanskrit poetry, drama, philosophy and literature in general. And it is not hard to imagine the constant flow of scholars and savants from Kashmir to different centres of learning in the rest of India and vice versa.

In philosophy and aesthetics the Pandits of Kashmir made such notable contribution that they were in great demand at centres of learning in the rest of India. Similar was the case with Kashmiri poets and dramatists. Bilhana's is an outstanding example. But long before him we find a poor Pandit, *Matrigupta*, repairing to the court of Vikramaditya-Harsa where his merit was recognised by the king who bestowed on him the viceroyalty of Kashmir. The family of Sarangadeva who wrote his *Sangitaratnakara*, and other works served under the Yadavas of Devagiri. Bilhana and Sarangadeva were not the only Kashmiris to have taken service under Vikramaditya VI Tribhuvanmalla. The Lakshmeswar inscription of the year 27 of the king refers to His Majesty's high minister and general Bhimanaya or Bhima, a native of Kashmir (Ep. Ind. Vol. XII, p. 28). Then again the Bodhi Gaya inscription of Asokachalla of Laksmana Samvat 51, makes mention of a Pandit of Kashmir, Abhaya Sriraja, who was the royal preceptor. Another celebrated monk of Kashmir Vinaya Srimlira chose his abode the Kanikastupavili in the district of Tipperah.

That the current of culture was flowing from both directions is amply proved by the installation at his court by Lalitaditya of the famous poets Vakpatiraja, the author of *Gaudavaho* and Bhavabhuti who has given us that masterpiece of lyric-cum-devotional poetry, *Malatimadhava*. Earlier, we are told by Kalhana, several scholars were

got from other parts of the country in the time of Abhimanyu to restore the study of Patanjali's *Mahabhasya* which had gone out of vogue in the Valley. A similar restoration is referred to in the reign of Jayapida.

Many famous writers and philosophers of Kashmir trace their origin to ancestors who came from different parts of India. For instance, Jayanta Bhatta's and his equally famous son Abhinanda's ancestors came from Gauda (Bengal). Kshemendra mentions the presence in Kashmir of students from Gauda and other parts of India. Abhinavagupta's ancestors came to Kashmir from Kanyakubja during the reign of Lalitaditya.

In music, dance and drama, we find a similar interchange of ideas. Whereas Kashmiri musicians acquired proficiency in North Indian *ragas*. We find at the same time that under Harsa masters from Karnataka were also invited to give lessons to musicians of Kashmir. Harsa also introduced the Karnataka type of coins as well as South Indian fashions in dress and ornaments. In the numerous sculptures found in Kashmir, we notice the Indian dress — the *choli* and the *dhoti*. When Kashmiri artists acquired mastery of the Gandhara style of art, they produced the images of Buddha and Bodhisattvas. This was the art which the Kashmiri missionaries carried across the frontiers of India to China and Tibet. And in architecture too the temple design and the ground plan very much followed the fundamentals of the temple plans in the rest of the country.

The administrative machinery in Kashmir was set up on the traditional pattern of the "eighteen offices of State" as mentioned in Mahabharata, and in the military organisation, the model was set by the Mauryan generals.

In commerce, trade, and social organisation there has been one pattern all over India — the same spirit animating the cultural and religious life of the country. Pilgrims from Kashmir whether Hindu or Buddhist visit the holy places from Rameswaram to Badrinath and Dwarka to Puri. We are told by Kalhana that Kashmiris were exempted from payment of pilgrims tax at Gaya. And year after year devotees of Siva from all over the country go on pilgrimage to the holy cave of Amarnath in Kashmir.

So whether in Sanskrit learning, or philosophy, or art and architecture, religion or science, a common life has been pulsating all over the country from ancient times, flowering into that broad-based 'unity in diversity' which is the unique contribution of India to human civilisation and progress.

NOTES

1. Raj., vii-590.
2. Ibid, vii-218.
3. Stein, trans, of Rajatarangini, Vol. II, p. 432.
4. Ibid.
5. Raj, v-217.
6. Raj; viii-2762.
7. Srivara, Rajavalipataka, 11-96.
8. Raj, i-104.
9. Sicin, Trs, of Rajatarangini. Vi|.l, pp. 100-102, footnotes.
10. Vikram, XVIII, 15, 16, 18.
11. *Raj*, i-168.
12. *India*, trans. Sachau. i, p. 207.
13. *Raj*., i-274.
14. Ibid., ii-62.
15. For the position of the ruins and their identification with Lalitadilya's foundations, sec *Raj*, trans, by Stein, Vol.1!, pp. 301-2.
16. *Raj*., v-44.
17. Ibid., v-39.
18. Ibid., v-118.
19. *Raj*., v-156.
20. Stein, trans, of *Rajatarangini*, Vol.11, p.560.
21. *Tarikhiu-I-Rashidi*, p. 430.

22. *Raj.*, vii-1177.
23. *Ibid.*, viii-472.
24. *Ibid.*, viii-1345.
25. *Ibid.*, v-168.
26. Stein, trans, of *Rajatarangini*, Vol.1, p. 219.
27. *Raj.*, v-342, 446; vi-91, 132; vii-135.
28. *Ibid.*, v-289.
29. *Ibid.*, vi-244.
30. *Ibid.*, vii-155-62.
31. *Ibid.*, vii-1604.
32. The designation Lon as other *Krams* in Kashmir is nowadays a mere name, there being nothing to distinguish those who bear it from other agriculturists in regard to customs, occupation, etc.
34. *Raj.*, v-101. *Ibid.*, vi-192.
35. *Ibid.*, iv-516, vii-309.
36. *Raj.*, iv-348.
39. Vikramankadevachariata, xviii-6.
40. *Raj.*, v-206
41. *Kuttanimata Kavya*, 122, 123, 124.
42. *Raj.*, vii-945.
43. *Raj* vii-901-11.
44. *Raj.*, vii 830.
45. *Raj.*, vii-233.
46. *Raj.*, viii-1823. See also vii-535, viii-1968, 3070-73 3096-3109.
47. *Raj.*, viii-3115. 050.
48. Desopadesa, vii.
49. *Raj.*, viii-459-60. O52.
50. *Ibid.*, vii-250.—
51. *bid.*, viii-1969.

52. *Raj.*, viii-2337.
53. *Raj.*, v-226.
55. *Ibid.*, vi-107. Sufi, *Kashir*, Vol. I, p. 146.
56. *The Classical Age*, p. 568.
57. *Raj.*, i-151.
58. *Raj.*, vii-858.
59. *Ibid.*, viii-707.
60. *Ibid.*, i-72.
61. *Raj.*, i-140-44
62. *Raj.*, V-195-203
63. *Ibid.*, iii-2, 233-40.
64. *Ibid.*, v-250.
65. *Raj.*, i-118-20.
66. *Ibid.*, iv-141.
67. *Raj.*, vii-364, 568; viii-862, 1850.
68. *Raj.*, vi-333.
69. *Ibid.*, viii-560.
70. *Ibid.*, viii-2471.
71. *Narmamala.*, 1-32, 50.
72. *Raj.*, iv-137-38.
73. *Raj.*, v-398.
74. Trans. of *Rajatarangini*, vol. I, p. 224.
75. We have a typical instance of king Harsa in the beginning of his reign installing four bells at the palace gate "to inform him by their sound of (those who came to make representation)" — *Raj.*, vii-879.
76. *Raj.*, vii-601 viii-181, 1046, 1982, 2618.
77. *Raj.*, vii-576.
78. *Raj.*, vii-591, vii-640.
79. *Narmamala*, p.6.

- 80 *Raj.*, vii-1304.
- 81 *Narmamala*, 1, 97, 127.
- 82 *Raj.*, v-175.
- 83 *Raj.*, v-265.
- 84 *Raj.* t viii-3336-38.
- 85 *Ibid.*, vii-580.
- 86 *Ibid.*, vii-1542.
- 87 *Raj.*, viii-814.
- 88 *Raj.*, vi-70.
- 89 *Ibid.*, vii-296.
- 90 *Raj.*, vi-623.
- 91 *Raj.*, viii-85-114.
- 92 Dutt, *Kings of Kashmir*, p. 8.
- 93 *Raj.*, vii-154, 267, 923, 1319, viii-177, 180, 860, 960, 1046, 1959, 2205, 3322.
- 94 *Raj.*, viii-422.
- 95 *Raj.*, vii-966, vii-912, 584.
- 96 *Ibid.*, vii-1172.
- 97 M' Crindle, *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great*, p. 274.
- 98 *Raj.*, vH-1371; viii-1513. This refers to the conventional division of the army as indicated, e.g. in *Amarkosa*, ii-8, 79, 81.
- 99 Samkaravarman was certainly not the first to levy *begar* for transport purposes, but he seems to have given to this *corvée* a systematic organisation and to have used it also for fiscal extortion, See Stein trans, of *Rajatarangini*, Vol. I, p. 209.
- 100 *Raj.*, iv-176.
- 101 *Raj.*, iv-147; v-143-44; vii-1553-56; viii-9.
- 102 *Raj.*, iv-147.
- 103 *Raj.*, vii-1552-56.
- 104 *Raj.*, viii-1577-78.

- 105 The horses of the Kambojas (Afghanistan) are referred to in Raj., iv-165.
- 106 *Raj.*, vii-1592.
- 107 *Raj.*, iv-265, 415; v-143-44; vii-394, 403, 910, 1512-14; viii-9, 73, 199, 941.
- 108 *Raj.*, vi-248-9.
- 109 *Raji.*, v-341-47.
- 110 *Raji.*, viii-29.
- 111 *Raji.*, viii-24, 28
- 112 *Ibid.*, viii-156
- 113 *Ibid.*, viii-25
- 114 *Ibid.*, 984.
- 115 *Ibid.*, iv-475-79.
- 116 Lawrence *The Valley of Kashmir*, p. 255.
- 117 *Raj.*, iv-407.
- 118 120. *Ibid.*, v-143-44.
- 119 *Early History of India*, p. 132.
- 120 *Raj.*, viii-257.
- 121 *Ibid.*, vii-1457
- 122 *Ibid.*, 589
- 123 *Ibid.*, iii-489
- 124 *Ibid.*, vii-365
- 125 *Ibid.*, viii-1883
- 126 *Raj.*, viii-2580.
- 127 *Raj.*, vi-348-53.
- 128 *Raj.*, vii-1374.
- 129 Dutt, *Kings of Kashmir*, p. 295
- 130 *Raj.*, iv-155.
- 131 *Raj.*, vii-1172-75.
- 132 Drew, *Jummoo*, p. 95.

- 133 *Raj.*, iv-506-11.
- 134 Tans, of *Rajatarangini*, Vol. II. p. 445.
- 135 *Raj.*, iv-628.
- 136 *Raj.*, v-171.
- 137 *Ibid.*, v-174.
- 138 *Ibid.*, iv-629.
- 139 *Ibid.*, iv-691. *L*
- 140 *Raj.*, v-176.
- 141 *Ibid.*, viii-1428.
- 142 *Ibid.*, v-302.
143. *Ibid.*, vi-70.
144. *Ibid.*, viii-3336.
145. *Ibid.*, vi-266.
146. *Raj.*, vii-1100-1107.
147. *Ibid.*, 1225-26.
- 148 Pandit, *The River of Kings*, p. 602.
- 149 *Raj.*, v-84-117.
- 150 *Ibid.*, iii-354; vii-909, 1539; vii-482.
- 151 *Ibid.*, viii-2423.
- 152 *Ibid.*, ii-58; iii-461, 480, Vol. II, p. 395.
- 153 *Raj.*, iv-495
- 154 *Ibid.*, vii-144
- 155 *Ibid.*, vi-9.
- 156 Stein, trans, of *Rajatarangini*, Vol. II, p. 427-28.
- 157 Yule, *Travels of Marco Polo*, Vol. I, p. 166.
- 158 *Nilamatpurana*, 529-41.
- 159 *Raj.*, ii-18, v-270, viii-770, 795.
- 160 *Ibid.*, iv-347.

- 161 *Nilamatpurana*, 748-754.
162. *Raj.*, U246.
163. *Ibid.*, iv-192.
164. *Vikram*, xviii, 72.
165. *Raj.*, vi-356.
166. Beal, *Si-yu-ki*, Vol. 1, p. 88.
167. *Vikram*, xviii-72.
168. *Raj.*, ii-122; viii-143.
169. *Ibid.*, i-97.
170. *Ibid.*, i-156.
171. *Ibid.*, iv-191.
172. *Ibid.*, v-116.
173. *Ibid.*, i-87, 88, 90, 96, 98, 100, 175, 307, 311, 314, 343; 11.55; jji-376, 481; iv-9, 639; v-23, 2* 170, 397, 403, 442; vi-89, 336; vii-182, 184, 185, 608, 898, 899, 908; viii-2408, 2419, 2420, 3355.
- 174 *Raj.*, v-170-71.
- 175 *Ibid.*, vii-495.
- 176 *Ibid.*, vi-30.
- 177 *Ibid.*, v-301, 397.
- 178 Beal, Vol. I, pp. 75, 76. Karala *ispashmina*.
- 179 *Raj.*, v-162.
- 180 *Raj.*, iv-616-17,
- 180 K.oul, *Jammu and Kashmir State*, p. 21
- 181 *Raj.*, vil-1221.
- 182 *Ain-i-Akbari*, i-p. 65.
- 183 *Raj.*, I-42..
- 185 Kshemendra, *Narmamala*, 1-127
- 186 *Raj.*, viii-1221.
- 187 *Kuttanimata Kavya*, 343.

- 188 Yule, *Travels of Marco Polo*, Vol. I, p. 167.
- 189 *Raj.*, i-201-2; iv-208.
- 190 *Raj.*, v-84; vii-347, 714, 1628.
- 191 *Ibid.*, vii-714.
- 192 *Ibid.*, viii-2010.
- 193 *Raj.*, iv-11.
- 194 *Raj.*, vii-195.
- 195 *Raj.*, vii-495.
- 196 For a detailed discussion on the monetary system of ancient Kashmir see Stein, 'Notes on the Monetary System of Ancient Kashmir,' *Numismatic Chronicle*, xix, p.p. 125-74 from which the present information has been culled.
- 197 See Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir*, p. 243
- 198 Cunningham, coins of indo-Scythians, p. 44.
- 199 *Raj.* vii-7.11-13.
- 200 *Raj.*, viii-1206-8.
- 201 *Ibid.*, v-48, 49.
- 202 *Narmamala*, I, 124.
- 203 Yule, *Marco Polo*, Vol. I, p. 166,
- 204 *Si-yu-ki*, Vol. I, p. 88
- 205 *Nilamatpurana*, 450-54.
- 206 *Raj.*, vii-1866-67.
- 207 *Nilamatpurana*, 461-68, 471-77; *Narmamala*, I 127; II, 80; *Desopadesa*, III, 32; *Raj.*, viii-137, 140.
- 208 *Narmamala*, I, 123, II, 80; *Raj.*, vi-140.
- 209 *Raj.*, iv-427; v-365, vii-544, 787, 945, 1067.
210. *Si-yu-ki*, trans. Beal, Vol. I, p. 148.
211. Kak, *Ancient Monuments in Kashmir*.
- 212 *Raj.*, v-380; vii-928-31, viii-2835

- 213 *Nilamatpurana*. rse 550: *Kuttanimata Kavya* verse 101.
- 214 Raj vii-195.
- 215 *Linguistic survey of India*, Vol-II, part 2.
- 216 Pandit Anand Koul, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, p 96.
217. See Buhler's Poonam Mss Coll. 1875-76, No. 143, fol. 673.
218. Lachhmi Dhar, *The Birth-Place of Kalidasa*, Delhi University Publication No. 1 (1926)
- 219 *Raj*., i-173, 177.
220. *The Cultural Heritage of India*. Vol. IV. n. 79
221. *Tantrasara*, p. 6.
- 222 *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. IV, pp. 77-78.
221. Taranath, *History of Buddhism*, trans, by W.T. Heeley, in *Indian Antiquary*, vol. iv. d. 101.
222. *Five Thousand Years of Indian Art*, p. 143.
223. *Raj*., vii-1575.
224. Goetz, op. cit., p.69.
225. Goetz, *Art and Letters*, vol, vii., p. 7.
226. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
227. Percy Brown. *Indian Architecture*, p. 190.
228. *Raj*., i-363, iii-350, 454. That yantras (yantra: yander) were machines or contrivances is proved by the use of the word in modern Kashmiri, for example, Yander (spinning wheel). Kadi-yonder (carding machine), Dosi-yander (contrivance for selling mud-wall), etc.

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CHAPTER: 6

Loharas Dynasty

The end of the rule of the Karkota dynasty, was inglorious, the subsequent rule of Avantivarman of the Utpala dynasty was benevolent and peaceful and leading and art received patronage. After this, however, the history of Kashmir is written in decay. The quick succession of brief and oppressive reigns, intrigues and rebellions, civil war and political murders, reduced the kingdom to a minor principality, shorn of its past glory and of all the territories tributary to it. The Change of dynasty after Didda's death, however, made no appreciable difference to the kind of rule that the unfortunate people had grown accustomed to. Samgramaraja (1003-28 A.D) who succeeded her, retained Tunga in his post of prime minister. The prudent but personally weak king would not attend to the affairs of the State and Tunga was, therefore, supreme in power. Tunga had in the earlier part of Samgramaraja's rule to face a revolt of ministers and Brahmins. But he quelled the rising with a strong hand. Some rebels were killed, some imprisoned and others banished.

Samgrameraja's Right

The period covered by Samgramaraja's reign witnessed a great upheaval in the political conditions of Northern India, which was destined to fundamentally change the course of Indian history. Mahmud of Ghazni led a number of expeditions and swept across the

Indus valley and along the Punjab plains in the early decades of the eleventh century. He did indeed stop short of the mountain-ramparts protecting Kashmir, and the several expeditions which Mahmud led in that direction never seriously threatened the independence of the Valley. Nevertheless, we find a distinct record of these events in Kalhana's Chronicle in the account of the expedition which was despatched to the assistance of Trilochanpala. In Mahmud's fourth expedition to India, Anandapala, the ruler of Udbhandapura, was, after a hard and prolonged struggle, compelled to make peace. After Anandapala's death, Mahmud turned again towards India and this time Anandapala's son, Trilochanpala, who had also previously met this foe in war during his father's reign, went to beat him back. He asked Samgramaraja for help against the enemy. Samgramaraja sent a large body of troops under the command of Tunga. These troops were not fully versed in the new tactics of war which the invaders were adopting and of which Trilochanpala had by then gained enough Experience. Trilochanpala therefore advised Tunga to take a defensive position on a high place of vantage. But he, proud of his fancied bravery, neglecting this sound advice rashly attacked Mahmud's army on the bank of river Tause, some distance from Poonch. He defeated a detachment of the enemy sent on reconnaissance. Next morning Tunga was surrounded by the full force of Mahmud. A fierce battle ensued in which Tunga was defeated and Trilochanpala's forces routed. Trilochanpala fought bravely and although subsequently he made several attempts to regain his territory and throne, they proved of no avail. The downfall of that once powerful dynasty of Sahiyas was complete.

Crest-fallen Tunga returned to Kashmir to face fresh intrigues which ended in his disgrace and death. His son, Kandarpasimha, who had become haughty and was going about with pomp and show was hated by the king, who now planned to have both the father and the son arrested simultaneously. Tunga came one day to the palace accompanied by his son. This was a favourable opportunity for the conspirators to make an end of them. When they were coming out after an audience with the king, the conspirators fell on them in the palace compound and cut them up with swords. Tunga's attendants

put up a brave fight, but were overpowered and killed by the royal troops.

After Tunga the commander-in-chief's post was conferred on Naga, one of whose brothers had been the prime mover in the conspiracy against Tunga. Bhadreswara who, like Naga the commander-in-chief, was a mean fellow, became the prime minister. He was the son of a vegetable gardener and had for some time adopted the calling of a butcher and fuel-vendor. Tunga, himself of mean origin, had appointed him as his assistant but he was secretly planning his master's over-throw all the while. Other posts of responsibility were given to equally bad men who robbed the treasury as well as the people.

Kalhana is, however, silent on Mahmud's attack on Kashmir which occurred probably in his sixth expedition to India when he marched to invade the Valley via the Tosamaidan pass. The fort of Lohkot on the southern slopes of the Fir Panjal range, and not far from the Tosamaidan pass, stood in the way and this brought Mahmud's only serious attempt at the conquest of Kashmir to a standstill. Weather seems to have played the decisive role. The siege of this stronghold at which Alberum too was present, proved fruitless. "After a while, when the snow began to fall and the season became intensely cold, and the enemy received reinforcements from Kashmir," the Sultan was obliged to abandon his design and to return to Ghazni.

Samgramaraja died in 1028 A.D and his son and immediate successor, Hariraja (1028 A.D), who is said to have been a youth of good disposition, ruled for only 22 days. His death is attributed to his licentious mother, Srilekha, who endeavored to secure the crown for herself after him.

To the great disappointment of the queen, the nobles of the kingdom installed her young son Ananla (1028-1063 A.D) as king. Atlanta's paternal uncle, Vjgraharaja, the ruler of Lohara, who had been intriguing for a long time to secure the throne for himself, made an attempt to oust Ananta, but he was defeated and together with his followers was burnt to death in a matha where he took refuge and which was set on fire by the royal soldiers.

Ananta, however, proved a feeble, cowardly prince, utterly unable to cope with the difficulties thickening around him. He depended

upon the advice and administrative skill of two Sahi princes, Rudrapala and Diddapala who took service under him. They were highly paid and wielded enormous influence. Rudrapala attained such eminence that the Raja of Julundhar, Induchandra, gave his daughter to him in marriage, and he prevailed upon Ananta to marry her younger sister named Suryamati. With this relationship with the king, Rudrapala was emboldened to further rob the State of its revenues. The weak king could not prevent officials like Dulfaka and Padmaraja to embezzle state funds. No wonder that he was impoverished and being addicted to chewing betel leaves, pawned even his crown to Padmaraja. An incidental observation of Kalhana pertaining to Padmaraja, the betel merchant with whom Ananta had pawned his royal diadem, throws light on the political conditions prevailing in northern India during this time. Padmaraja was also an agent of King Bhoja of Malwa for the supply to him of holy water from the spring of Kapatesvara in Kashmir. He employed a relay of carriers from Kashmir to Malwa for this purpose. This shows that notwithstanding the political isolation of Kashmir and the Muhammadan conquest of the region to the south, regular intercourse and trade with the Hindu kingdoms of the rest of India must have continued. The queen had to redeem it with funds from her own treasury. He was fond of horses and employed mean jockeys with whom he was as intimate as if they were his equals. With the death of the two Sahi princes, Ananta, who seems to have been incapable of carrying on the administration by himself, came under the influence of his pious queen, Suryamati. She checked the extravagance and vagaries of the king, and gradually assumed full charge of the royal affairs. Haladhara, a servant of humble origin who by her favour rose to be prime minister, proved a strong administrator and secured for a time prosperity and peace for the land. This enabled Ananta to lead expeditions to territories adjoining Kashmir on the south and assert his authority in those tracts. We learn from Bilhana's *Vikramankadevacharita* that Ananta's supremacy was acknowledged by the princes of Champa (Giamba) and Darvabhisara. Kalhana, however, records only a victory over king Sala of Champa, who is known to us by his full name of Salavahana from a Chamba grant plate. Of Ananta's expeditions against the hill states of Urusha

and Vallapura, we are distinctly told that they ended in failure and ignominious retreat.

But one feminine weakness destroyed all that queen Suryamati had achieved. Blinded by filial affection, she persuaded the king to abdicate in favour of his son, Kalasa, in the year 1063. At this time a similar event took place in the neighboring principality of Lohara. Ananta's cousin Ksitiraja who ruled there, renounced the world and disliking his own son, bestowed the kingdom on Utkarsa the second son of Kalasa. This was destined later to lead to a political union of Kashmir with Lohara on Utkarsa's succession in Kashmir. The object, perhaps was to put the administration into stronger hands and to secure the throne for her son. But soon after the formal coronation of Kalasa, the royal couple regretted the act, and Ananta resumed the de facto administration of the government, keeping Kalasa the nominal king.

For a number of years after Kalasa's coronation the arrangement devised by Ananta of ruling the land himself and keeping his son as the nominal king, worked well. But Kalasa came under the baneful influence of depraved and licentious companions, who drove him to commit excesses. Many a time the youthful king was involved in fracas in which, he suffered public disgrace. This led to an open rupture between the king and his parents. Queen Suryamati, however, prevailed upon Ananta not to take strong action against Kalasa, and advised him instead to repair to the temple at Vijayeswara along with stores and treasure. For some time Kalasa experienced difficulties for want of money but the field having been now left open, he organised the administration efficiently and raised an army to fight his father's forces. Suryamati again intervened and though Ananta with his treasure and loyal army had still the power to punish Kalasa and forcibly depose him, she prevented open hostilities to break out and effected reconciliation. Ananta contended himself by calling Harsa, Kalasa's son, whom he desired to place on the throne, to live with him at Vijayeswara.

This reconciliation, however, ended soon. Kalasa raised more forces and attacked Vijayeswara, setting fire to the temple where Ananta was staying, Ananta lost his treasure and thereby the means to retain the

allegiance of his troops and followers. He thus fell easily into the hands of his son who insisted on his going into exile. Ananta's condemnation of his wife's baneful advice resulted in a violent altercation between him and his wife during which he committed suicide by plunging a dagger into his abdomen. Suryamati repented for her angry words which had led to this tragedy and ended her life as a sati on her husband's funeral pyre.

Kalasa's character changed for the better following his parents' death and devolution on him of responsibilities on assumption of full regal powers. After effecting a solemn reconciliation with his son Harsa, the king set about to improve the administration of the kingdom and by a wise and shrewd control over the state budget removed the financial stringency which had resulted from uncertain political conditions and civil war. He was thus able to make some rich endowments. He used to move about incognito over his kingdom and had thus a first-hand knowledge of the living conditions of his subjects. He punished corrupt officials and restored the confidence of the people in the government. In this he was ably assisted by capable ministers like Vaman and the great Kandarpa, the commander of the frontier defences.

An era of peace and prosperity following these measures, enabled Kalasa to assert his authority in the neighbouring principalities. An expedition in support of Samgramapala, the rightful ruler of Rajauri, restored Kashmir's suzerainty over this hill state. Similar expeditions to territories south of the Valley resulted in the consolidation of the kingdom and making his influence felt among the small hill states. This success of Kalasa's foreign policy was strikingly demonstrated in the winter of 1087-88 A.D when he held an assembly in his capital of the rulers of eight hill states around Kashmir from Unisha in the west to Kastavata in the east. Among them was Asata the chief of Champa (Chamba), whose name is found in inscriptional records as well as in the geneological list of the Chamba Rajas; Kirti, the chief of Nilapura whose daughter was married to Kalasa; Samgramapala, the chief of Rajauri, who was reinstated to the throne by Kalasa's forces. Utkarsa, Kalasa's second son, the chief of Lohara; Sangata the king of Unisha; Gambhirasiha the ruler of Kangra; and Uttamaraja

the ruler of Kastavata, were the other chiefs who attended this assembly.

The last years of Kalasa were embittered by the disunion and suspicion between himself and Harsa. The youthful prince, extravagant by nature and given to a life of ostentation, felt annoyed at the scanty allowance and low regard which his miserly father bestowed upon him. Evil minded parasites took advantage of Harsa's disposition and instigated by them he connived at the hatching of a plot to murder Kalasa. This was betrayed to Kalasa, who tried to obtain from his son a repudiation of his part in it, but Harsa refused to do so. Harsa was threatened by his fellow conspirators and when he was in serious danger of losing his life at their hands, Kalasa ordered his arrest (1088 A.D.). Smitten and exasperated by the disloyal conduct of his son, Kalasa again took to the licentious life of his youthful days. He spared Harsa's life but decided to deprive him of the succession. He called his younger son, Utkarsa from Lohara in order to have him installed as ruler of Kashmir. At the approach of death, which his excesses hastened, Kalasa set out in great torments to the temple of Martand, where he died, after vainly endeavoring to see once more the imprisoned Harsa (1089 A.D.).

Utkarsa's accession to the throne was facilitated by Harsa's continued confinement in prison. His desire to retire abroad was turned down and apprehensive of his safety, he managed to win the sympathy and help of his younger half-brother Vijaymalla. The latter felt dissatisfied with the treatment he received at the hands of Utkarsa and raised an open rebellion. The cowardly Utkarsa thought of having Harsa murdered in prison, but owing to Harsa's presence of mind and his own vacillation, the murderous attempt failed. Availing himself of the confusion that prevailed in the palace following Vijayamalla's rebellion, Harsa managed to escape and seized the throne which belonged to him by right.

Harsa (1089-1101 A.D)

King Harsa was a remarkable person in many ways. Possessed of exceptional prowess, he obtained renown by merits rarely to be found in other kings. Versed in many languages, a good poet, a lover of music and arts, and a repository of different branches of learning, he became

famous in other kingdoms too. The songs which he composed were still heard with delight in Kalhana's time. We see these and his contrasting qualities of mind, reflected in the elaborate description, which Kalhana gives of the character of this striking figure among the later Hindu rulers of Kashmir. This was no doubt based on firsthand information, such as that given by his own father Champaka. Kalhana pictures to us King Harsa as a youth of powerful frame and great personal beauty, courageous and fond of display and well versed in various sciences. In an eloquent passage, he emphasises the strongly contrasting qualities of Harsa's mind and equally strong contrasts in his actions. "Cruelty and kind heartedness, liberality and greed, violent self willedness and reckless supineness, cunning and want of thought — these and other apparently irreconcilable features in turn display themselves in Harsa's chequered life." From this description of Harsa's character, it can easily be gathered that he was a man of unsound condition of mind.

Harsa commenced his rule well. He showed wise forbearance in retaining many of his father's officials and trusted servants, notwithstanding their former conduct towards him. This paid quick dividends. Not only were the intrigues and disaffections, raised by his half-brother Vijayamalla, nipped in the bud, but he had to flee to, and take refuge in, Dard territory where he met his end under an avalanche. Harsa's position was thus consolidated and Kalhana gives a glowing account of the splendor of the Kashmir court at this time of his reign. He introduced many new fashions in dress and ornaments and encouraged his courtiers to imitate his own taste for costly and gaudy attire. His munificence towards men of learning and poets is said to have made even Bilhana, the well-known court poet of the Chalukya king, Parmadi, regret that he had left Kashmir, his native land, during Kalasa's reign. Kalhana refers to the introduction of Carnatak tunes and musical instruments and coinage into Kashmir by Harsa, and several extant coins of the king corroborate the unmistakable imitation of contemporary coinage of Carnatak. An indication of prosperity and affluence enjoyed by Kashmir during Harsa's early rule is given not only by Kalhana's description of the magnificence of Harsa's court, but by the abundant issue of gold and silver coins.

At about this time Harsa sent a strong force to assert his suzerainty over Rajauri, whose chief, Samgramapala, had for some time been trying to shake it off. The Kashmir troops under Kandarpa, the able commander-in-chief of Harsa, stormed Rajauri town and after a bitter struggle in which two hundred Kashmiri soldiers lost their lives, carried the town and forced Samgramapala to surrender and pay tribute.

But soon the evil parasites and councillors came to the fore and succeeded in securing the disgrace and banishment of this valiant and faithful general. Treachery began to stir among those nearest to the throne. Jayaraja, a half-brother of Harsa, from a concubine of Kalasa, engaged in a dangerous conspiracy with Dhammata, a relative from another branch of the Lohara family. Harsa, however, came to know of it early, and with skilful diplomacy he drove a wedge between the two and when Jayaraja had surrendered to his fellow conspirator, Dhammata, he got him executed. Dhamroata's turn followed and he together with his four sons met his death by sword and hangman. Harsa put out of the way other relatives in a similar manner, though they had given no cause for suspicion.

Extravagant expenditure on the troops and senseless indulgence in costly pleasure involved Harsa in grave financial difficulties. New and oppressive taxes were imposed and as a characteristic feature Kalhana mentions that "even night soil became the object of special taxation." These, however, proved inadequate to replenish the exhausted treasury. Harsa then turned his attention to the rich endowments of temples, which he resumed. His accidental discovery of hoarded treasures at the temple of Bhima Sahi, induced him to spoliage other temples. More ruthless and revolutionary was the seizure and melting of gold and silver images of gods and goddesses in temples throughout Kashmir and Kalhana's mention of a few temples which escaped Harsa's attention only shows the thoroughness of his iconoclasm. That Kalhana uses the epithet of Turuska (Muhammadian) while referring to Harsa's temple spoliations and also makes a reference to Turuska captains being employed in his army and enjoying his favour, shows that Muhammadian influence must have already penetrated to Kashmir in his time.

The rising discontent among the people who were burdened with

heavy imposts, together with the unpopularity of his vandalistic acts, made Harsa fall lower in his morals and fanned by the depravity of his parasites he indulged in incipient acts of incest with his sisters and father's widows. This further sapped his strength and mental balance, and the few expeditions he led against some of the hill states who had given up his suzerainty show him as a weak, vacillating and timid commander. An attempt to invade Rajauri, with himself in command of troops, ended in an ignominious defeat and subsequently a similar fate met his expedition for the capture of the fort of Dugdhghatta which guarded the pass leading to the Dard country. An earlier fall of snow compelled the royal forces to beat a retreat and the attack from the Dards turned it into a complete rout. It is in this campaign that we first notice the two brothers, Sussala and Uccala, valiantly fighting for the king. They were descended from a side branch of the Lohara family and destined to succeed Harsa to the throne of Kashmir.

In 1099 A.D fresh calamities befell the miserable people of Kashmir. While plague was raging and robbers everywhere infesting the country, there occurred a disastrous flood which carried off the ripened crops. A severe famine followed adding to the universal distress. The fiscal exactions of the king continued. To divert the attention of the discontented and rebellious people, Harsa attacked the Damaras, or feudal landlords. Kalhana gives revolting details of cruelties perpetrated on them under the king's orders.

While the Damaras of the northern division were organising a united resistance to the king's forces, Harsa's suspicions were raised against the brothers Sussala and Uccala as possible claimants to the throne. Both of them fled at night from Srinagar in the autumn of 1100 A.D, and with the help of Damaras took refuge with the hill chiefs — Uccala in Rajauri and Sussala in Kalinjara. The rebellious Damaras opened negotiations with Uccala, the elder brother, and induced him to claim the crown. His claims were based on geneological facts. He was through Jassaraj, Gunga and Malla, the fourth direct descendant from Kantiraja, the brother of Didda and uncle of king Samgramaraja of Kashmir.

Uccala being joined by a small force of rebel Damaras, boldly set out for Kashmir and crossed the Tosamaidan pass in the early months

of the spring, while it was still covered with snow. There he was joined by disaffected hill tribes and Damaras and the large force so formed marched to effect a junction with the rebel Damara forces of the northern division. The combined forces under Uccala successfully attacked Harsa's governor of the district and occupied a strong position in Parihaspura. The king roused to activity by the near approach of danger attacked the pretender at Parihaspura and obtained a complete victory. Uccala escaped with difficulty while many of his followers met their death before and within the temple quadrangle of Parihaspura.

While Uccala, left unpursued by the King, was engaged in reorganising his forces in the north of Kashmir, Sussala, aided by the forces of Kalha, the ruler of Kalinjara, launched his attack on Kashmir from the south. Here he was joined by the few remaining Damara chiefs and they drove the royal forces before them in the direction of the capital. Though successfully checked for a time by Harsa's newly-appointed commander-in-chief, Chandraraja, this diversion enabled Uccala to resume the offensive. Avoiding the open plain, where the king's mounted troops could effectively defeat them, the rebel Damara forces marched across the mountains into the Sindh valley where they won a complete victory over the king's army, thus leaving the road to the capital open for Uccala.

Harsa's Dethronement and Death

While the rebel forces were knocking at the doors of Srinagar, Harsa, surrounded by sycophants and incapable advisers, was vacillating in his plan of action. Some advised him to abandon the city and flee to the mountain fastness of Lohara. Some were of the opinion that the king should stand fast and fight to the end. Utter confusion prevailed and there were incessant desertions. While the royal forces were getting thinner, and treason was rife among the officials and royal attendants, Harsa turned upon the innocent Malla, the father of Uccala and Sussala, who leading the life of a recluse had peacefully remained in the city. Harsa had him ruthlessly killed and Kalhana gives a graphic account of the scene when Malla's widow, Nanda, while watching the camp fires of her son's armies gleaming in the distance, burned herself

after her husband's death, invoking their revenge upon the head of his murderer.

The news of this murder further infuriated Uccala and Sussala. Sussala launched his attack on Vijayeswara and defeating the royal forces there, hastened to Srinagar in the hope of seizing the crown for himself. His attack was halted by a spirited defence by royal forces under Bhoja, Harsa's heir-apparent. Uccala at this moment launched his attack on the city from the north and aided and abetted by disloyal elements, surrounded the royal palace. Harsa led in person the remnants of his troops but while vainly attempting to halt the onslaught at the bridge in front of the palace, his fighting elephant was wounded and turning back threw his forces into disorder and panic. Harsa managed to retire across the bridge but the rebels set the adjoining buildings on fire which forced the king to leave the palace with a few mounted troops. Seventeen ladies of the royal household, among them the chief queen Vasantalekha, who was a princess of the Sahi house, burned themselves on a pavilion of the palace from which they had watched the approaching doom. The palace was sacked and set on fire by plundering Damaras who were joined by the city mob.

Harsa was eager to die fighting, but paralysed by conflicting advice and the misfortune, he moved about helplessly on the outskirts of the city, the few attendants and followers deserting him one by one. Among the few who remained loyal to him was his minister Champaka, Kalhana's father, but he sent him away to go to the rescue of his son, Bhoja who, like his father, was also in a tight position. Ultimately Harsa after vainly trying to find refuge in the house of various grandees, took shelter in a mendicant's hut along with his devoted personal attendants, Prayaga and Mukta. Here he learnt of the death of Bhoja at the hands of the enemy forces. Kalhana gives a pathetic account of the last days of the king in his hideout. But after only two days, his refuge became known and soldiers were sent to capture or kill him. When he saw the hut surrounded he, after sending his cook Mukta away, prepared to fight and sell his life dearly. After a desperate resistance Harsa was slain and his head was carried before Uccala who had it burned while his body, naked like that of a pauper, was cremated by a compassionate wood dealer.

With the death of Harsa we come to the end of the Seventh Book of Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*. The Eighth and the last Book, which forms nearly half of the whole work is a detailed and rather confusing account of Kalhana's contemporary times. Apart from its value as throwing light on the social and economic conditions prevailing in Kashmir then, this account is of little interest to the modern reader. The main events following Harsa's death, however, centre round the two brothers Uccala and Sussala, who being both ambitious to secure the crown engaged themselves in incessant struggles.

Uccala, the elder brother, however, succeeded in the race to the throne of Kashmir, but his position at the time of accession was precarious. The Damaras with whose help and power he defeated and killed Harsa, were all powerful and behaved as true rulers of the land. In order to secure safety, he ceded Lohara territory as an independent chief ship to Sussala, his younger brother. To break the power of the Damara lords, he resorted to Machiavellian tactics, setting one against the other. Thus weakened, they were easily overcome and their disarmament was effected with the use of minimum force. Uccala was a capable niter and fairly energetic. To win the sympathy of the people in general, he ruthlessly punished the unpopular Kayasthas or clerks and petty officials. He also seems to have been a just and shrewd ruler and a few anecdotes given by Kalhana illustrate this characteristic of the king. But he had his defects too. He was of jealous disposition and would not tolerate personal merits in others. He had a harsh tongue and temper which slowly alienated from him the support and loyalty of his followers.

Uccala's respite from troubles did not last long. His brother, Sussala, not content with the chief ship of a small hill state, led an attack on Kashmir, but Uccala being alert defeated him easily and he had to flee to the Dard country wherefrom he regained his own hills with very great difficulty.

But a great danger to Uccala's throne was growing from another quarter. Bhoja's young son, Bhiksacara, had been spared by Uccala who brought him up in his court. But having excited the king's suspicions he fled in 1045 and was given shelter by king Naravarman of Malwa.

Meanwhile Uccala effected a reconciliation with his brother Sussala, to whom a son, Jayasimha, was born in the very year of Bhiksacara's escape to Malwa. But Uccala was not destined to live long. Another conspiracy developed under the leadership of the city-prefect Chudda and his brothers who though born in humble circumstances, were ambitious enough to aspire to royal power. They claimed their descent from Yasaskara and joined by discontented officials, attacked the king at night. Uccala though unarmed fought with desperate bravery, but was overpowered by his assailants and cruelly murdered (8 December. 1111 A.D.).

Utter confusion prevailed in the palace following this ghastly murder, and padda, a brother of Chudda, whose hands were red with the king's blood, put on the crown, assuming the name of Sankharaja. But he could retain it only for a night, as next morning Gargachandra, leading Damara of Lar district and a trusted supporter of Uccala, attacked the traitors and overpowering them with his forces, avenged his master's death in the blood of Radda and his fellow conspirators.

Finding no suitable successor to Uccala near at hand, Gargachandra, installed Salhana a half-brother of Uccala on the throne. But the new king proved unworthy of the position thrust on him. A weak licentious man, he let the affairs of the State be conducted by Gargachandra. Meanwhile Sussala learning of his brother's death, set out from Lohara with a small force for Kashmir. Gargachandra met his forces near Baramula and easily defeated them. Sussala had to flee over the snow covered pass and could with great difficulty reach back Lohara.

But Gargachandra was not happy with his protege. The latter foolishly connived at a plot to kill Gargachandra which became known to the Damara chief. He thereupon opened negotiations with Sussala. Taking advantage of this favourable opportunity, Sussala again entered the Valley and was soon joined by the forces of the unpopular Salhana, and those of Gargachandra who gave him his daughter in marriage. Sussala marched on to Srinagar without opposition and entered the palace in triumph. Salhana whose reign had not lasted for more than four months, was made prisoner (March, 1112 A.D.).

Sussala (1112-1120 A.D.), like his brother, had to face several uprisings and attacks of pretenders. In character also he resembled

Uccala and the latter's treacherous murder was a warning to his being alert and ruthless. He naturally took measures to curb the activities of the powerful Damaras and in order to ensure a greater security for himself transferred his treasures to the mountain fastness of Lohara. This made him unpopular and he had to face internal troubles from the rebellious Damaras. Even his father-in-law, Gargachandra turned against him. With his influential relatives who owned large estates in the Valley, Gargachandra raised a dangerous uprising. Sussala had to carry his fortified seats in regular sieges before he could force this feudal lord into submission. Gaining respite from troubles in the Valley, Sussala went to Lohara, and renewed his friendship with the chiefs of the neighbouring hill tracts.

In the summer of 1120 A.D the ring of the rebel forces closed on Srinagar, which Sussala defended with great courage and valour. But soon he found treachery and confusion all around him. He had to contend with Brahmin assemblies who resorting to the holding of solemn fasts, wanted to assume the direction of the affairs of the State. For three months Sussala held out, but ultimately fearing a mutiny among his own troops who could no longer stand the hardships of a long siege, Sussala left the city along with a band of faithful troops. After bribing dangerous opponents on the road to gain a free passage, he ultimately reached Lohara.

On Sussala's departure, the officials and troops in Srinagar made common cause with the Damaras, and Bhiksacara (1120-21 AD) was in triumph installed as king.

But he was not destined to rule for long. Of a licentious nature, he gave himself up to the pleasures of life and totally neglected the affairs of the State. The Damaras, who had now acquired supreme control over the Valley, were oppressing the people. Rivalries between their chief groups under Prithvihara and Mallakostha, further added to the confusion. The country was in chaos, and trade was at a standstill. Money became scarce and the necessities of life scarcer. "At that time", laments Kalhana, "when the land had no king or rather many kings, the rules of all business broke down manifestly."

In the midst of such troubles, Bhiksacara directed Bimba, his prime minister, to lead an expedition against Lohara, the seat of

Sussala. Bimba secured the alliance of Somapala, the chief of Rajauri and aided by a force of "Turuska" or Muhammadan soldiers under Salara Vismaya, launched an attack on Sussala's forces near Poonch. Bimba's Kashmirian soldiers who were thoroughly dissatisfied with Bhiksacara's rule, deserted him and crossed over to Sussala. Bimba had to beat a retreat and Sussala marched to reconquer Kashmir. His return was eagerly awaited by the people by now disillusioned of Bhiksacara and the helpless prince who had no resources failed to appease them. Marching rapidly from Baramula, Sussala appeared suddenly at the gates of Srinagar and unopposed by Bhiksacara once more ascended the throne (May, 1121 A.D.).

Disheartened and forsaken, Bhiksacara fled across the Pir Panjal Pass to Pusayana under the protection of Prithvihara. There he established his headquarters and slowly gaining some adherents, both he and Prithvihara led a force of Damaras to attack the southern district of the Valley. Having gained military experience and being keen to avenge his defeat, he boldly attacked and defeated the royal troops at Vijayeswara. The victorious Damaras then set fire to the temple where the people of adjoining villages had taken refuge. This act of sacrilege was the turning point in Bhiksacara's fortune, as he became an object of derision and ridicule among the people of the Valley. Although he won several victories against the royal forces during the fight which followed this event, he could not dislodge Sussala, who had meanwhile replaced the Kashmir ministers and troop-leaders suspected of treachery by trusted and reliable people of the Chenab valley.

Bhiksacara's growing skill in conducting a guerilla type of warfare made his Damara friends jealous of him. Apprehending the danger of his gaining enough power to ultimately suppress them, their attitude towards him became lukewarm. He had therefore to repair to his place of refuge in Pusayana for the winter.

The following year, 1123, brought still greater sufferings for the unfortunate people. In the spring, the rapacious Damara forces again gathered around Srinagar and a prolonged and Tierce siege ensued. The communications with the countryside being blocked by the Damaras who also seized the fresh crop, it was impossible to procure

any grain stores and thus thousands of lives were lost.

This dealt a heavy blow to the king. Disheartened by the scenes of misery among the people and the death of his beloved queen, he abdicated in favour of his son, Jayasimha, whom he called from the castle of Lohara and crowned king in June 1123 A.D. But Sussala soon changed his mind and retained the government in his own hands. He now succeeded in effecting at least an outward pacification of the country, helped no doubt by the rivalries and dissensions prevailing among the leading Damaras. Bhiksacara, however, remained at large under the protection of his Damara allies.

Sussala now plotted to destroy his arch-enemy by assassination and for this purpose made a secret pact with one Utpala, the treacherous agent of the Damara chief, Tikka. It was planned that Utpala, after disposing of Bhiksacara, should kill Tikka as well. Utpala, however, betrayed the king and divulged the plot to Tikka, who advised him to turn the tables on Sussala. While he was holding a secret and intimate meeting with Utpala and a party of conspirators, Sussala was seized by them unawares and mercilessly killed (February, 1128 ad). The stampede and confusion that ensued this ghastly deed, allowed the murderers not only to escape, but to carry off the victim's head as well as his body.

Jayasimha (1128-1155 A.D)

The youthful son and successor of Sussala, Jayasimha, heard the news of his father's murder in great sorrow. Surrounded by dangers, with an empty treasury and no army, it seemed impossible for him to hold his own in the city for long. No wonder some of his close associates advised him to flee in the darkness of the night to his stronghold in Lohara.

The conditions prevailing in Kashmir at the time have been graphically described by Kalhana. The Damaras, the feudal landlords, exercised their authority in their districts or even villages, with the arms of their paid followers, and secure against the attacks of the royal forces in their strongly fortified castles, were carrying on perpetual intrigue against their rivals or the king. Like the Barons of medieval England, they often defied the king's orders and in times of unrest,

the royal authority could be asserted only with force.

Taking advantage of a succession of weak rulers and constant rivalries at the court, the Damaras had overwhelmed the kingdom and in the words of Kalhana, "the city was without splendour, the citizens deprived of all means, and the land overrun by numberless Damaras who were like kings. Sussala's 16 years of rule were passed in a relentless struggle against these haughty barons, but all his efforts failed to crush their power. Roads were unsafe for travel, fields were left uncultivated by the harassed peasantry and famine and misery ruled the land. Loot and arson followed each attack and counterattack on cities and towns by the followers of the contending claimants to the throne.

To add to Jayasimha's fears and apprehensions, there was the imminent danger from the archenemy of the family, Bhiksacara, who was encamped a few marches away from Srinagar.

Jayasimha, however, did not lose heart. To win the sympathy and support of the citizens of Srinagar as well as the vacillating soldiers, he proclaimed a general amnesty. Luck also favoured him at this critical moment. A heavy snowfall during the night prevented Bhiksacara to rapidly march on Srinagar. Meanwhile, the forces of Panchachandra, son of Gargachandra, the powerful Damara leader, whose help he had sought, joined the royal troops. The loyal elements and supporters of Sussala when they heard of his murder hurried to the aid of Jayasimha, and in the battle that ensued, Bhiksacara was defeated, his Damara followers deserting him one by one.

Jayasimha thus ascended the throne in the midst of an open rebellion, when the land was still suffering from many wounds caused by the preceding struggles. Having been freed from the immediate danger to his throne, he set himself to the task of extending his authority over the Valley. For this he relied upon cunning diplomacy and unscrupulous intrigue, in which his Prime Minister Lakshmaka took a leading part. Utpala, the murderer of Sussala, was captured and executed. Soon he succeeded in winning over most of the enemies of Sussala. But in the following year, Bhiksacara returned to create fresh trouble for the king. However, the measures taken against him by Sujji, Jayasimha's able commander-in-chief, threw the pretender's forces

into confusion and he was once more forced to retire. Sujji, however, was the victim of Lakshmaka's intrigue and he fled along with his loyal followers across the frontiers of the Valley and opened negotiations with Bhiksacara. The latter again marched into the Valley, but Lakshmaka's forces discomfited him, and he had to seek shelter in the fortified town of Banasila (present Banihal), where the Khasha chief betrayed him. Deserted by his Damara followers, the fortunately pretender was apprehended and died fighting the soldiers who had been sent for his capture.

Almost immediately there arose a new rival. Lothana, a half brother of Uccala, helped by elements disloyal to Jayasimha, was set free from his prison in Lohara. He crowned himself the ruler of that district and captured all the treasures, which Sussala had accumulated in that mountain fortress. With the help of this and the disgruntled and disloyal officials and commanders of Jayasimha, he raised a force and prepared to defend his newly-won freedom and power against the forces of Jayasimha. Realising the danger from the loss of his family stronghold, the latter despatched a considerable force under Lakshmaka across the mountains to retake it.

Lakshmaka endeavoured to reduce the hill-fortress by a blockade. But this proved fruitless and when his forces were being decimated by the summer fevers of that place and Sujji, his personal enemy, was advancing at the head of his troops from Rajauri, Lakshmaka raised the siege and beat a retreat which soon turned into a rout. Lakshmaka was captured and it is recorded that among the Kashmirian soldiers who were able to escape, thousands died of the fever which they had contracted during this expedition. Lakshmaka was later ransomed from the chief of Rajauri. On his return to Kashmir he resumed his position as chief minister of Jayasimha.

Lothana who had by this victory consolidated his position at Lohara employed Sujji as his commander-in-chief. But where military valour did not succeed, Jayashimha's intrigues against him began to bear fruit. Lothana was soon deposed by a half-brother of Jayasimha, named Mallaijuna, who had been kept as a prisoner at Lohara. Mallarjuna was a weak ruler given to the pleasures of life and could not stand the forces of Jayasimha who forced him to pay tribute. But

the feuds between the new chief, Mallarjuna, and Lothana continued, and profiting by this a Damara lord, Koslhesvara, made himself virtually the master of Lohara. When, therefore, Jayasimha won over this Damara chief, as well as Sujji whom he reinstated in his office and deputed against Mallarjuna, the latter had to abandon the stronghold and flee to Rajauri. Here he was ultimately captured in 1135 A.D. Soon after, Kosthesvara was also secured and safely imprisoned in Srinagar. Sujji too, did not enjoy long the confidence of the king. Intrigues were hatched against him and he was treacherously murdered together with his relatives and followers.

Having secured peace from his rivals to the throne and also the suppression to some extent of the Daraaras, Jayasimha attempted to extend his influence in territories bordering on the Valley. He tried to profit by the troubles which had broken out among his Dard neighbours at the death of their ruler Yasodhara. But instead of gaining any advantage there, the Dards under Viddasiha the new chief, created trouble for Jayasimha in return. Lothana who was living as a refugee in the Dard territory was encouraged to raise a rebellion again and with the help of a powerful Damara chief of the Kishenganga valley, Alankarachakra, he succeeded in spreading unrest in that strategic area. Jayasimha sent a powerful army and laid siege to the stronghold of the Damara lord. After the siege had continued for some time, the defenders ran short of food and water and Alankarachakra was forced to deliver up Lothana and Vighraha-rajā, another pretender, to Jayasimha (1144 A.D.).

A fresh incursion into Kashmir by the Dard tribes, under Bhoja, another pretender to the Kashmir throne, was defeated and pushed back by Jayasimha's forces in a battle fought on the banks of the Wular Lake. Simultaneously a fresh rebellion of a few Damara lords in the south of the Valley, was crushed by Rilhana, who had succeeded Sujji as the commander-in-chief of Jayasimha's forces. The king also succeeded in securing the surrender of the pretender, Bhoja, who appears to have later gained the confidence of the king.

Finding that there was now no pretender on the scene, whom they could use as a tool, the Damaras were demoralised and were disarmed and subdued one by one. The peace thus established in the much

harassed land, enabled Jayasimha to make some pious foundations. But though Kalhana gives a long list of these, it appears that they were only in the nature of restorations of temples and towns which had suffered damage during the preceding decades of unrest and chaos.

With a mention of the members of Jayasimha's family and the matrimonial alliances he contracted with the ruling families of neighbouring hill states, Kalhana closes his monumental work, bringing down the history to the 22nd year of Jayasimha's reign (1149-50 A.D). From Jonaraj's brief account of the concluding years of the king's life we learn that Jayasimha ruled for five years longer, during which he undertook a successful expedition against 'Yavana' Turuskas, who, however, cannot be identified.

For the history of the remaining period of the Hindu rule we have to depend upon the account furnished by Jonaraja who wrote in 1459 A.D. It is only an outline, in contrast Kalhana's exhaustive and detailed account of the rule of his contemporary kings.

Jayasimha was succeeded by his son Paramanudeva, who during his rule of ten years was mainly concerned with filling up his treasury with the assistance of two officials, Prayaga and Janaka. The inscriptions on the foundations of the temple unearthed at Tapar, mention its erection by this king and the extensive dimensions of the ruins corroborate the statement about his affluence. His son Vantideva succeeded him to the throne at his death in 1164 A.D and after an uneventful rule of seven years, died in 1171 A.D. With his death, the Lohara dynasty came to an end for want of an heir.

The deterioration in the social and moral condition of the people following the long centuries of misrule and oppression, can be gauged by the fact that when the nobles assembled to choose a successor to the vacant throne, they could find no better person to be installed as king than one Upyadeva who was, says the Chronicler, "the very model of a dunce. Once this foolish king felt happy at the sight of large blocks of stone, and he ordered his ministers to increase the size of smaller ones by making them drink the milk of beasts."²

After his death in c.1180 A.D, his brother, Jassaka, who was a greater fool, wore the crown. This enabled the Damara Lavanyas, the overbearing barons, to flout the royal authority with ease and indulge

in acts of brigandage. In fact, Jassaka, who was not keen to occupy the throne, was retained there by these rapacious landlords who thus got a golden opportunity to exploit the land. Two clever Brahmin brothers named Kshuksa and Bhima, fishing in troubled waters, secured for themselves positions of power and it was only the fear of the Damara barons, which prevented them from capturing the throne.

Jassaka's rule of 18 years ended with his death in 1198 A.D, Jagadeva who succeeded him seems to have been an enlightened despot, who tried to rid the land of the ravages of the Damaras and give the people a clean administration. The Kayastha officials who naturally disliked his policy of reform, rose in a body and with the help of the powerful barons forced the king to quit the Valley. Jagadeva, however, regained the throne with the help and advice of his faithful minister, Gunakararahula, but after a shaky rule of over 14 years, he died in 1212 A.D of poison administered to him by Padma, the 'Lord of Marches'.

There followed a civil war again. Rajadeva, the son of Jagadeva, who had fled to Kishtwar on the death of his father, was soon brought back to the Valley by the enemies of Padma. While Rajadeva was undergoing a siege in a fort laid by the forces of Padma, the latter was suddenly killed by a Chandala and Rajadeva was annointed as the king by the Bhatts or Brahmin Corporation. But later suspecting them of an intrigue against him, Rajadeva ordered a general plunder of the community and "then was heard from among them the cry *Na Bhattoham* (I am not a Bhatta).³

But this did not bring him peace. The royal authority was seriously threatened by the Lavanya barons and one of them, Baladyachandra, occupied half of Srinagar, the king failing in dislodging him even from there. After a disturbed and inglorious rule of about 22 years Rajadeva died in 1235 A.D.

The throne then passed to his son Samgramadeva. He was a strong prince but his determination to crush the power of the barons was frustrated by the activities of his brother Surya, who fleeing from the court raised a rebellion with the help of the barons were overcome, but meanwhile the troubles gave an opportunity to the Brahmins under the leadership of the sons of Kalhana, to assert themselves and

become powerful again. They forced the king to retire and take shelter with the chief of Rajauri. Then followed a period of total anarchy with the Damaras 'sucking the very lifeblood of the people.' For how long this anarchy remained is not known, but ultimately Samgramadeva succeeded in defeating his adversaries and regaining the throne. He was not, however, destined to rule long. Kalhana's sons, whom he had desisted from killing because they were Brahmins, hatching a plot against him, murdered him in cold blood in 1252 A.D. Saka, a learned poet, is said to have composed a poem with Samgramadeva as its hero, which was, "like the necklace, an ornament of the learned." But the work is not now traceable.

Samgramadeva was succeeded by his son, Ramadeva, whose first act as king was to avenge Samgramadeva's death by killing his murderers. He seems to have been an able administrator and governed the kingdom successfully with the help of his able minister, Prithviraj. His queen, Samudra, built a *matha* at Srinagar, on the banks of the Vitasta which was marked with her name, and the king himself repaired the Visnu temple of Utpalapura.

The king had no issue and adopted Lakshmanadeva a boy of Bhisyakapura, who succeeded him on his death in 1273 A.D. Lakshmanadeva was a learned man "filled with the love of the six branches of learning." But he did not have the vigour and courage of a Kshatriya and was defeated and killed by a Turuska (Turkish Muhammadan) named Kajjala in c.1286 A.D.

His death seems to have resulted in a period of anarchy. Two figures, Samgramachandra the Damara lord of Lar and Simhadeva, the baron of Dakhinpara Parganas, appear as dominating the scene. The latter declared himself the king of Kashmir but his authority was at every step contested by Samgramachandra. It was only after the latter's death that Simhadeva was able to occupy the kingdom. He made a number of religious foundations which, taking into account the depleted condition of the treasury, do not seem to have been either extensive or substantial. During the later years of his life, he veered towards agnosticism and met his death as a result of his intrigue with the daughter of his nurse (1301 A.D.).

Sahadeva (1301-1320), his brother, who succeeded him on his

death, established his authority with the help of his minister Ramachandra. He led expeditions to such distant places outside the Valley as Panjgabhar on the east of Rajauri and brought the territory under his sway. Sahadeva's rule is notable for his giving shelter to two adventurers from abroad — Shahmira from Swat and Rinchin from Tibet — which ultimately resulted in the overthrow of Hindu rule in Kashmir and its replacement by the Muslim kings of the Shahmiri dynasty.

The Final Phase

The history of medieval Kashmir, though sad, is remarkable in many ways. A glorious period of Kashmir's history almost ended with the reign of Avantivarman (855-83 A.D). Earlier, the conquests of Lalitaditya (624-61 A.D) and Jayapida (776-817 A.D) led to an influx of wealth into the country which resulted in contentment and prosperity. The enlightened rule of Avantivarman consolidated these gains further and increased the material prosperity of the people, and this led to an upsurge in art, philosophy and literature. But this ease and plenty carried with it the germs of decay. Thus after Avantivarman's reign, incessant feuds, civil wars and upheavals became rampant. Death, famine and pestilence stalked the land. There were feudal wars between the kings and the Damaras and Lavanyas; temples were destroyed, cities and towns were burnt; crops were damaged and there was murder and loot. There were also popular risings; court intrigues and assassinations; and kings were installed and dethroned in quick succession.

A state divided against itself and resting on a shattered economy could not be expected to maintain the large territories annexed to it during the period of the early Karkotas. Pressed on all sides by the war-like tribes, the boundaries of the kingdom got shrunk, until the imbecile kings were content to rule over the precincts of the Valley alone, and sometimes even less. The Kabul valley, Rajauri and Poonch, Kangra and Jammu, Kishtwar and Ladakh had, one by one, thrown off their allegiance to the kings of Kashmir and became independent principalities. In mocking contrast to the power and prestige of the Karkotas, these petty chieftains now found opportunities to interfere

directly in the affairs of the Valley, and even carry out, with impunity, marauding expeditions thereto. To fight their rivals, many Kashmir kings recruited soldiers from amongst the people of these principalities.

Kashmir, therefore, fell a prey to adventurers who made many attempts to reduce the Valley. But in times of such emergency, the people of Kashmir forgot their differences and rose to defend their country and for more than three centuries they withstood the on slaughts of many outside *foes*.

By the beginning of the 13th century A.D, Islam had made considerable progress in northern India and Central Asia, and though Kashmir had successfully withstood the attacks of Muslim conquerors like Ghazni, it was being gradually influenced by the preachings of numerous Islamic teachers. By the time Sahadeva (1301-20 A.D) ascended the throne of Kashmir, a fair proportion of the people had already accepted Islam.

A stirring drama of intrigue, rebellion and war lasting for 20 years (1318-38 A.D) was enacted, and finally Muslim rule was established in Kashmir. The dominating personality during all these years was Queen Kota — a woman with an unbounded lust for power.

Sahadeva who was a weak-minded king was fortunate in having an able and kind hearted prime minister and commander-in-chief, by name Ramachandra. He virtually ruled the land. He carried out his duties faithfully and tried to conserve the slender resources of the kingdom and maintain a semblance of ordered government of the country. He was ably assisted by his beautiful and intelligent daughter, Kota. But the overbearing barons, known as Kota (castle) Rajas, protected by their castles and holding rich tracts of land, consistently flouted his authority. In these circumstances, the king always looked out for aid.

At this time a fugitive prince named Rinchin came to Kashmir from Tibet with a following of several hundred armed men. There had been a civil war in Tibet and the Kaim any a Bhuteas had treacherously killed the ruler of western Tibet along with his relations and friends. Rinchin, who was a prince of the royal line, however, escaped a similar fate. Collecting all the scattered forces, he dealt several heavy blows to his enemies, but being outnumbered he was forced to flee. He crossed

the Zojila and sought Ramachandra's protection. As Ramachandra was badly in need of an ally, he readily took Rinchin and his followers into his service. Kota, who managed her father's affairs thus came into close contact with the prince who helped her in her untiring efforts to alleviate the suffering of the people. They also helped Ramachandra in consolidating the power of the king.

They were joined by another protégé of Ramachandra, Shah Mir. He was a Muslim adventurer from Swat and in pursuance of a dream in which he had been told by a holy man that he would succeed to the throne of Kashmir, he had come to the Valley "together with his relatives. The king of Kashmir greatly favoured him by giving him a salary, even as the mango tree favours the black-bees."

But at this time Kashmir was attacked by Dulchu, a Tartar chief from Central Asia. Instead of opposing the enemy, Sahadeva fled to Kishtwar leaving Ramachandra to manage the affairs of the State. Impoverishing the Valley during a stay of eight months, Dulchu finding that provisions were scarce, tried to return through the passes leading to the plains of India. But he could not escape nature's wrath. Caught in a snow storm, he perished together with thousands of prisoners he had taken. Then the Gaddis from Kishtwar led a marauding expedition into the Valley but were driven back by Ramachandra who now assumed the title of king.

Pitiable was the condition of the people, at this time. Laments the Chronicler, "When Dulchu had left the place, those people of Kashmir who had escaped capture, issued out of their strongholds, as mice do out of their holes. When the violence caused by the Rakshasa Dulchu ceased, the son found not his father nor his son, nor did brother meet his brother. Kashmir became almost like a region before the creation, a vast field with men without food and full of grass"⁴

During these dark days Kota played a prominent part in organising resistance to the enemy. After her father assumed the formal kingship of Kashmir, she did her utmost to give succour and relief to the afflicted people. Rinchin had already gained popularity among the Kashmiris as a result of the prominent part he had played against the enemy.

Rinchin in his turn became ambitious and he grew envious of

Ramachandra's accession to the throne. At an opportune moment his followers rose in revolt and took the royal army by surprise. Ramachandra managed to escape and the capital fell into the hands of Rinchin without much difficulty. Ramachandra and his daughter Kota took refuge in the strong fort of Lahara (Lar Pargana) where he began to reorganise his forces for battle against Rinchin.

But he had to content with a foe who was at once brave and crafty. Realising that he had little chance against Ramachandra in open combat, Rinchin resorted to a mean stratagem. He sent his Tibetan followers into the inner precincts of the Lahara fortress disguised as simple pedlars but with arms concealed under their long robes. When all suspicion had been removed, his men attacked Ramachandra's quarter and murdered him in cold blood before his guards could come to his help. Simultaneously Kinchin's forces launched an assault on the fort and encountering no resistance, planted their flag on its ramparts.

Rinchin now became the undisputed master of Kashmir. But, he realised that through his base action he had forfeited Kota's love. Thereupon he set himself to the task of courting her. He gained the goodwill of her brother whom he appointed as his minister. At last her grief was assuaged.

Rinchin still followed the Lamaist religion. But Kota Rani urged him to adopt Hinduism. However, he failed to get into the Hindu fold and embraced Islam. He thus became the first Muslim king of Kashmir.

Rinchin, with the help of his queen, Kota Rani, wisely and justly conducted the affairs of State. He broke the power of the feudal barons, introduced order and discipline to his disgruntled and disorganised army and reorganised the administrative machinery. He was faithfully served by his minister, Shah Mir, a fellow refugee who had taken service under Ramachandra. Shah Mir was also gaining popularity among the Kashmiris because of his abilities and his sympathy with and understanding of the grievances of the people.

Though Rinchin succeeded in a large measure in subduing his opponents, he could not escape the machinations of his enemies abroad. Sahadeva's brother, Udyanadeva, had also fled (the country at the time

of Dulchu's invasion. He had taken refuge with the chief of Gandhara. Enraged at Rinchin's usurpation of the throne, he organised a rising in Kashmir under a powerful baron by name Tukka. The rebels launched an attack on the king's palace. In the skirmish that followed, Rinchin received a strong blow on the head as a result of which he fainted. Believing him to be dead the unruly elements spread disorder in the city, but Rinchin regained his consciousness and chased the enemy away. He inflicted severe punishment on all those who had taken part in the uprising and generously rewarded those who had remained loyal.

But his wounds became worse despite all possible treatment and care. Knowing that his end was near, he entrusted his son, Haider, and his queen, Kota Rani, to the care of his faithful minister, Shah Mir. He died in 1320 A.D, after having ruled for three years.

Kashmir was again thrown into disorder. Though Rinchin had given the semblance of peace, he had not succeeded in completely suppressing the disorderly elements, which raised their head again after his death. Kota Rani realised that she could not hold the country with her slender resources. Therefore, when Udyanadeva was advancing upon Kashmir with a strong force, she offered him the throne as well as her person, waiving the claims of her son Haider Udyanadeva on ascending the gaddi married Kota Rani with great pomp.

By her charm, beauty and intelligence, Kota Rani quickly gained ascendancy over the king, whom she, in a short time, relegated to the background. From now onwards she was the virtual ruler of the kingdom.

Kota Rani — The Last Hindu Ruler

It was at this time that Kashmir was threatened with an invasion by Achala. Udyanadeva like his brother Sahadeva sought safety in flight. But Kota Rani decided to resist the invader. She mustered together all the available forces, and warned the people that if they did not rise to the occasion, a worse fate than that which befell them at Dulchu's hands would overtake them now. Encouraged by her undaunted courage and forgetting all their differences at the approach of common danger, they flocked under her banner. She organised a

strong resistance and Shah Mir remained loyal to her. Kota Rani realising her shortcomings against Achala, took recourse to diplomacy. Feigning submission, she sent word to him that as the throne of Kashmir had fallen vacant due to the king's flight, she and her ministers would install him on the throne provided his army withdrew, Achala, blinded by greed, believed her and keeping only a small detachment with him in Kashmir, sent the rest of his troops back to their home. Then Kota broke her word, attacked and destroyed the detachment and capturing Achala, had him beheaded. At once Kota became the idol of the people. Learning of Kota Rani's success against the invader, Udyanadeva returned to the capital and notwithstanding his betrayal of the country at a critical moment, "Kota respectfully received him with her head bent down, even as the eastern hill received the gloom-dispelling full moon on its head."

Kota Rani was now the undisputed master of the kingdom. She held her court personally, dispensed justice, appointed and dismissed her ministers. But with all her qualities of a born ruler, she could not stop the rot that had already worked deep into the body-politic of Kashmir. Powerful factions were constantly intriguing against her. Often she had to resort to force to curb her rebellious ministers and warlords. Once while leading a force against her turbulent commander-in-chief, she was skilfully maneuvered into a fortress, captured and imprisoned. It was, however, the sagacity and shrewdness of one of her loyal ministers, Kumara Bhatta, that secured her freedom. Reaching her capital she organised a stronger force with which she finally defeated her rebel commander.

All this time Shah Mir was cleverly taking stock of the situation. Being a shrewd politician, he was biding his time to seize the throne without raising any opposition from the people or the powerful barons. He had already endeared himself to the people by his bravery during Dulchu's and Achala's invasions. He had won the esteem and trust of the queen by his loyalty. Being the guardian of her son, Haider, he proved to be a terror to Udyanadeva and "frightened the king day and night by holding up the boy before him, even as one frightens a bird by holding up his hawk". He established alliances with the barons through the marriage of his children and grand-children into their

families. With the help of these powerful relations he took possession of large estates which he controlled without any interference from the king or the queen. With a steady eye on his goal, he had been consolidating his position and bided his time.

These actions roused the suspicions of Kota Rani who had planned to continue in power even after her husband's death. She had appointed a clever and astute politician, Bikhsana Bhatta, as her second minister and had entrusted to him the guardianship of her son by Udyanadeva. While these intrigues and counter-intrigues were going on, King Udyanadeva died on the Shivratri night in 1338 A.D.

Fearing an open revolt by Shah Mir and his relations, Kota Rani kept the death of her husband a secret for four days. During this interval she made quick but efficient arrangements for the protection of her kingdom and, in order to checkmate Shah Mir, she publicly disowned her son, Haider, who had been brought up by Shah Mir and who, she feared, might be proclaimed king. Having at first won the loyalty of the powerful Lavanya tribe, she ascended the throne. Shah Mir and others, finding their plans thwarted, "bowed to her as to the crescent of the moon."

But she enjoyed no peace although she did her best to please her subjects by "bestowing much wealth on them." She was afraid of Shah Mir who was her rival to the throne. She, therefore bestowed honours on Bikhsjina Bhatta. Shah Mir, however, was not slow in perceiving the queen's designs. He realised that, as a first step to power, he had to remove Bikhsana who was the mainstay of her power. He, therefore, took recourse to a base stratagem.

Shah Mir pretended to be very ill and had it known that his end was near. Kota Rani sent Bikhsana Bhatta to enquire about his health. When he arrived at his residence followed by his bodyguard, Shah Mir's servants engaged Bikhsana's followers in conversation and Bikhsana, unattended, was conducted into the patient's room. Shah Mir at first complained, spoke of his illness and then suddenly jumped out of his bed and with his sword killed Bikhsana. When the news of this treacherous deed reached Kota Rani she was enraged, but was dissuaded by her ministers from seeking revenge.

From then on, Shah Mir gained in prestige. Only after five months

of her accession to the throne, an insurrection broke out in the Kamraj district and the queen went to the chief town and fortress of the district, Jayapura (modern Andarkot), to direct operations personally. No sooner had she left Srinagar than Shah Mir at the head of a strong contingent of his followers captured the city and proclaimed himself king. The Lavanyas quickly organised themselves into a force and launched a strong attack on his followers. Kota Rani learning of Shah Mir's rebellion also mustered a strong army at Jayapura.

For a month there raged a fierce and sanguinary battle between the forces of Shah Mir and the Lavanya tribe. Shah Mir was hard pressed and step by step was being driven out of the city. He sent emissaries to his feudal relatives and implored them for help. When victory was in sight for the Lavanyas, the forces of Lutsa, the Lord of the Marches and a relation of Shah Mir, attacked them from the rear. Shah Mir also launched a strong counter offensive from the front, and thus surrounded the Lavanyas. Elated at this victory, Shah Mir threw open the doors of the treasury and handsomely rewarded those who had stood by him. Learning of this sudden turn in the battle, Kota Rani ordered the gates of the fort of Jayapura to be shut and made preparations for facing a long siege.

The fort was situated in the middle of a lake. The town was on the shore of the lake opposite the fort. Both could therefore be held by even a small garrison against a large army. And in the case of Shah Mir a long siege was fatal, since his position was contested from all sides. Being a shrewd politician, he realised that the conflict had to end in a short time. He knew Kota Rani's weakness for power. It was for power that she had married Rinchin, the murderer of her father; for power she had disowned her son; and for power she had remarried Udyanadeva.

With her brave followers, the Lavanyas, defeated and herself surrounded by the powerful forces of Shah Mir, Kota Rani fell avictim to Shah Mir's assiduity and surrendered on the explicit condition that she would share the bed and the throne with him. And so Shah Mir "took possession of the kota (castle) and of queen Kota."

After coming under his power she realised that she would not get a fair deal. Shorn of her dignity, she seemed destined to be a forgotten

and forlorn woman. Shah Mir, sent word to her to present herself before him. Dressed in the richest costume and wearing her most precious ornaments, she entered his bed chamber. Triumphant Shah Mir approached her, but before he could draw her into his arms, Kota Rani had stabbed herself to death.

Thus ended the life of one of the most romantic figures in the history of Kashmir. There can be no two opinions about the character and abilities of this remarkable woman. That she was a born diplomat nobody can deny. It was due to her clever moves that Achala was killed and his invasion halted. Considering the ferocious nature of the feudal landlords of her time and the indiscipline among her troops, it required all her intelligence, force of character and administrative ability to govern the kingdom so well. She was a source of inspiration to Rinchin and later to Udyanadeva. But at the same time we cannot ignore her fickle-minded policies and her divided loyalties at a time when the fortunes of the kingdom stood at crossroads.

Hindu Rule-An Appraisal

With Kota Rani's death we come to the end of Hindu rule in Kashmir. It is not difficult to account for its fall. During the latter half of the ninth century and onwards, the rulers of Kashmir adopted a policy of strict isolation of the Valley from the rest of India. It was no doubt dictated by the rise of Islamic power in north-west India and although Kashmir preserved its independence, protected by its inaccessible mountain barriers, the people had to pay a heavy price for it in their long sufferings and pitiless oppression. For, the one striking fact about the history of Kashmir is that its people rose to great heights of art, culture and economic prosperity when it received the impulses from outside rather than from within — from India direct, from Indo Greeks and Indo-Scythians. Asoka's sovereign power extended to Kashmir and the results of its influence may be seen to this day in the remains of Buddhist temples and statues and of the city founded by him 250 years before Christ. The great emperor had established a friendly intercourse with Greece and Egypt and it is to this connection that we owe the splendid stone architecture and sculpture of Kashmir.

The next landmark is the reign of Kaniska, whose territories extended from Central Asia to Bengal. Renowned throughout the Buddhist world as the pious king who held the Buddhist Council in Kashmir, the contacts established under his rule with outside world and the rise of Mahayana resulted in intense cultural and religious activity of the people of Kashmir whose sons carried the doctrine to distant places in Central Asia and China.

And so also during the days of Lalitaditya and his immediate successors, when though the tide of political influence and conquest was turned, Kashmir was brought in close contact with the rest of India. The only difference was that instead of more advanced and powerful races from India spreading their influence over Kashmir, it was from Kashmir that conquerors were to go forth over neighbouring districts of the Punjab and northern and western India. Lalitaditya is the most conspicuous figure in the early history of Kashmir and raised his country to a pitch of glory it had never reached before. His grand-son also carried on in his footsteps, but a succession of weak rulers resulted in the fall of the dynasty and its empire. Under Avantivarman, we witness a period of consolidation and though his son Samkaravarman tried to emulate the great deeds of Karkota kings, he met with dismal failure. This was the last outward effort of the Kashmir rulers who, to save their small kingdom from conquest by the new Muslim kings of North India, sealed the passes and behind the protecting walls of high mountains reduced the people of Kashmir to the plight of a beleaguered garrison.

But the resources of the small kingdom were too poor to maintain a large population. Connections with the centres of trade and commerce in India being severed, the pressure on agricultural land increased, resulting in the emergence of powerful landlords. Kashmir thus presents the picture of a besieged fortress which when its provisions get exhausted becomes the scene of unrest and mutiny among the garrison itself.

So we find the frustrated rulers of Kashmir with their traditions of splendour and power taking recourse to the imposition of numerous taxes and exactions to meet the expenses of a pompous court and a large standing army. And when even this proved insufficient they turned their attention to temples and their endowments, sparing not

even the sacred gold, silver and copper statues of gods and goddesses which they melted for purposes of coinage. The kingdom thus fell into a vicious circle. The masses being reduced to poverty the State revenues dwindled, resulting in fresh taxation and more misery. The soldiers deserted the king's army and took service under the powerful barons or organised themselves into bands of armed condottiere offering their services to one or the other of the numerous claimants to the throne.

No wonder we witness intrigues, rebellions, murders and quick successions of kings. The fate of the kingdom was dependent upon the character of the sovereign and there was little of political consciousness among the people. They patiently endured the despotic whims of the ruler and although we find many rebellions taking place, these were mostly raised by feudal landlords for their class interests.

Added to the instability of the administration was the evil influence of the harem on the king and his court. The incredible sensuality of the kings and queens which brought untold sufferings upon the State, throws a lurid light on the manners and customs of the age and gives a rude shock to the fond illusion of benevolent despotism of our ancient rulers. Similarly, we find a lack of character among the officials. Among the crowd of those painted by Kalhana, we rarely come across one who showed steadfast loyalty, stern morality, a deep sense of duty or even an appreciation of ordinary moral rules.

While this sad drama was being enacted in the close confines of Kashmir, Islam was entrenching itself in north-west India and in spite of its seclusion and closure of its passes, the new ideas were in perceptibly penetrating into the Valley. By the beginning of the twelfth century A.D, Islam was slowly accepted by the harassed people. It is not therefore surprising that Shah Mir had local supporters and could ascend the throne and hold it without the aid of an outside army or ally.

This is another illustration of a unique characteristic of the people of Kashmir. In the course of their long history they have practically demonstrated their religious tolerance and respect for the belief of others. When for instance Naga worship was replaced by the early Brahmanical religion which later gave place to Buddhism, there was

the least tinge of violence or ill-feeling. And when finally Buddhism was again supplanted by the reformed Brahmanical creed, the change was brought about imperceptibly and without any outburst of violence. In fact we find kings, queens and courtiers not only building and endowing Hindu temples and Buddhist viharas and chaityas, but worshipping in all. Saivism and Vaisnavism flourished side by side, and received equal homage from the king and the commoner. And so also Islam, which entered the Valley imperceptibly, did not meet with violent opposition. For two centuries after the accession of the first Muslim king to the throne of Kashmir, the administration was carried on by the traditional Brahmin class with Sanskrit as the court language.

Another notable feature of Kashmir history is the administrative ability displayed by the queens, though unfortunately in most cases it is accompanied by dissolute character, still the careers of Sugandha, Didda, Suryamati and Kota and a host of minor ones, throw interesting light on the opportunities afforded to women to take effective part in public life. There are examples of justice and good administration. The benevolent and peaceful reigns of kings like Chandrapida, Avanti varman and Yasaskara show the value placed by the kings on high morals, truth and selfless service to the people placed in their care.

But Kashmir was generally unfortunate in its rulers and the people had to endure unspeakable miseries at the hands of several tyrants. Kalhana presents gruesome pictures of kings and queens who gloried in shameless lust, fiendish cruelty and pitiless misrule. But although in political development and barbarous cruelty the people of Kashmir may very well be likened to the Europeans in the Middle Ages, still, in refinement, culture and all that go to make up civilizations, they were in a far more advanced stage. Learning flourished and was very much appreciated in the Kingdom. Fine arts like music and dance were cultivated by the king and people alike. Art and architecture greatly prospered, and even the worst kings and their officials continued the pious practice of building temples and monasteries. In religion and philosophy, Kashmir showed remarkable progress and evolved a new school of Saivism, whose humanity and rationality is in contrast to the dogma and philosophy of many Saiva sects that preceded it.

NOTES

1. Alberuni's *India*, ii. P. 13.
2. Jonaraja; *Dvitiya Rajatarangini*, (ed. Peterson), 30 sqq.
3. Ibid., 79-91.
4. Jonaraja, Ibid, 152-155.

CHAPTER: 7

Religious Development

The religious beliefs and the activities of the Kashmir kings, led them to erect many religious foundations such as temples, *viharas* and *mathas*. With a few exceptions all of them tried to do something or the other for the sake of religious merit. The advent of the Lohara dynasty was also the period of the growth and development of Kashmir Saivism and of great literary activity both in its Tantric and philosophical aspects. Earlier kings, in the period for which we have a reliable record, from Lalitaditya Muktaplida onwards (c.699-736 A.D.) built large *viharas* and *mathas* and endowed *agraharas* for their maintenance. King Lalitaditya built at Huskapura, (modern Ushkar), a splendid shrine of Visnu called Mukta-svamin, and a large *vihara* with a stops. He also built a lofty temple of stone for Siva Jyestharudra and made grants of *agrahara* villages. He built the wonderful Martanda temple and is credited with the erection at Parihasapura (modern Paraspor) of several Visnu images with the titles, Parihasakesava, Muktakesava, Mahavaraha and Govardhanadhara (modern Gurdan Udar). He built the Rajavihara with a large quadrangle *catubsala*¹ a large *caitya*, and a colossal image of the Buddha. Kalhana tells us that he built all these structures with practically equal cost on each. Even his wives and ministers consecrated hundreds of images of Visnu and Siva.² Thus though the predominant faith under Lalitaditya was Vaisnavism, the worship of Siva, Martanda and Buddha went on side by side with perfect toleration and mutual veneration at this time.

The tenth and eleventh centuries were marked by a spirit of

religious activity and this was also the time when a distinguished line of literary men expounded the special Kashmir form of Saivite philosophy called *trika*. Curiously enough references to donations to Visnu and the foundation of temples devoted to him become rare. No king of this period is reported to have endowed a Buddhist *vihara*—though Buddhist donations were resumed under the second Lohara dynasty. Lalitaditya's patronage of the sun-god was not repeated. Until the coming of Islam, Siva ruled supreme in Kashmir; other gods were far beneath him in importance. King Parvagupta (A.D. 949-50), though he had accumulated riches through evil ways, yet founded a shrine of Siva. A lady of King Yasaskara's seraglio (A.D. 939-48) constructed a temple of Visnu Yasaskarasvamin.³ During the reign of King Ksemagupta (A.D. 950-58) the Jayendravihara was burnt and he built on its site the temple called Ksemagaursvara.⁴ This gives a clear indication of the way in which Buddhism was supplanted gradually by Saivism in the valley of Kashmir. Queen Didda also founded two temples of Yisriu and a *vihara* and a *matha* for outside (daitika) Brahmins.⁵

King Ananta's queen, Suryamati (A.D. 1028-63) founded many Siva temples and a *matha* provided with an *agrarahara*, *banalingas*, *trisulas* and other sacred emblems.⁶ King Kalasa (A.D. 1063-89) built Siva temples at Vijayaketra and Tripuresvara and a shrine in honour of Siva Kalasesvara at a place unspecified.⁷ We shall deal with King Kalasa and King Harsa later. King Uccala of the second Lohara dynasty (A.D. 1101-11) bestowed thousands of cows, horses, gold and other gifts on the Brahmins and put up the illustrious image of Visnu known as Parihasakesava which King Hara had carried off.⁸ His brother and Successor King Snssala is also credited with the building of three high temples in his own name and in the names of his mother-in-law and wife, and with the renovation of Diddavihara which had been burnt down by a sudden configuration.⁹ With the coming to the throne of King Jayasimha and the consequent establishment of good government, religious activity seems to have received a further stimulus. Among this king's religious foundations those in favour of Buddhism stand prominent; to his patronage are attributed the *vihara* of Ratnadevi,¹⁰ another *vihara* in honour of his deceased wife Sussala¹¹

the building afresh of the Cankunavihara¹² and the completion of the Sullavihara founded by his uncle.¹³ Kalhana tells us that the shrine of Siva Rilhanesvara which he erected at Pravarapura excited wonder and became pre-eminent among pious foundations.¹⁴ He completed the three temples of his father and made a permanent endowment to the matha of King Uccala.¹⁵ He also consecrated the image of Visnu Govaradhanadhara.¹⁶ This religious activity on the part of the king was followed by his ministers and their families. Bhutta, the younger brother of Jalla, the samdhivigrahika of the ruler of Darvabhisara,¹⁷ established lingas of Balakesvara and Bhuttesvara, and founded a town called Bhutapura (modern Batapor in Machipur Pargana) with great houses, viharas and mathas.¹⁸ Mahkhaka, the brother of Alamkara, the minister of foreign affairs (Samdhivigrahika) distinguished himself by erecting a shrine of Srikantha (Siva) together with a matha.¹⁹ Rilhana, another minister, made gifts to Siva temples and placed a golden parasol on a Visnu temple.²⁰ Cinta, wife of Udaya, the commander-in-chief, adorned the bank of Vitasta by constructing a *vihara* with fine buildings.²¹

Despite this general tendency towards religious toleration and desire for religious merit leading to the establishment of so many lofty temples, *viharas* and mathas, there were, during the first Lohara dynasty and even earlier, kings whose avariciousness led to severe spoliation of the temples and even desecration of the images of gods. We have already discussed King Samkara-varman's (A.D.883-902) excessive habits of avarice which led him to plunder sixty-four temples through special officers and to resume the villages belonging to the temples against a compensatory assignment (*pratikara*).²² King Kalasa (A.D. 10163-89), by a sudden change for the worse in his conduct, destroyed first the copper image of Surya, called Tamrasvajnin, and also seized the brass images from the Buddhist *viharas*.²³ Later he regretted this conduct of his, and, believing that the god Surya was angered by the destruction of the image of Tamrasvamin, he proceeded to take refuge at the temple of Martanda to propitiate the Sun-god in order to save his life. Though he was a worshipper of Siva, he offered a gold image of the Sun-god before the feet of Martanda.²⁴

King Harsa of the first Lohara dynasty, though reputed for his lavish gifts and elegant tastes, had his own peculiar ways. He is

remembered for the spoliation of temples and the breaking of the images of the gods, which he performed so thoroughly that only two divine images of Kashmir were spared by him, viz., the illustrious Ramasvamin in Srinagar and the main image of the great Martanda temple. Two Buddha statues were saved through the interference of Kalhana's uncle Kanaka and the *sramana* Kusalasri.²⁵ Kalhana, however, tells us that, at the time of his death, King Harsa uttered the words, "O Mahesvara!" showing his faith in Saivism.²⁶ The work of temple-looting was carried out so thoroughly that Harsa appointed a special officer named Udayaraja as superintendent for the destruction of the gods (*devotpatananayaka*).²⁷ Not being content with the mere confiscation of the images Harsa got them deliberately defiled by the naked mendicants (*naganatha*) who were employed by the king as his agents in looting the temples. "Evidently this deliberate pollution," opines Prof. A. L. Basham, "was impelled by some motive other than the mere relief of financial stringency; and it may surely be inferred that the king's whole policy was in part inspired by a bias towards heresy."²⁸

Kalhana uses the epithet *turuska* for this king, which led Stein to interpret his iconoclasm as evidence of his leanings towards Islam.²⁹ Referring to Harsa's iconoclastic orgies, R. C. Mitra writes : "Being a Turuska by birth, he was a *mleccha* by faith and the sacrilegious action of Harsa and his grandfather (*sic*) Kalasa may thus be easy of explanation."³⁰ Though Harsa's iconoclasm has led the scholars to believe that he had leanings towards Islam we do not quite understand as to what made Mitra believe that Harsa was a Turuska by birth. If it were so, the whole of the first Lohara dynasty might be claimed to have cherished the Mohammedan faith. Allusions to Turuskas become more frequent now than before. We are told that Harsa had a hundred Turuska chiefs under his pay. On his siege of Rajapuri, when he was quite successful, it is the rumour of an attack from the Turuskas which led him to abandon the enterprise and flee back to his kingdom. The reference alludes to the rising power of the Turks in Northern.

Naga Worship

There are reasons to believe that in the fourth and third centuries

B.C. Naga worship may have been the principal religion in Kashmir. The Buddhist text *Mahavamsa* mentions that when Asoka's adviser Moggaliputta Tissa sent his missionary Majjhantika to preach Buddhism in Kashmir and Gandhara, he found it under the rule of Naga king Aravala who could destroy the corn and other harvests by hailstorms. Majjhantika was met with hail and rain on his approach to Kashmir, but being unaffected by this, the Naga king realised his spiritual powers and together with his followers accepted Buddhism. A similar *legend* is related by Heun Tsiang. These are, however, the Buddhist versions of the *Nilamatpurana* legend already mentioned in an earlier chapter. They seem to corroborate the belief that the Naga or snake worship was the religion of the original inhabitants of the Valley.

Most of the rites prescribed in the *Nilamatpurana* are concerned with the nature of worship of popular deities. But there are some festivals which are particularly connected with the worship of Nagas. Thus Nila, the lord of the Nagas, was worshiped on the festival of the first fall of snow. He and other Nagas were also propitiated on *Amanjaripuja*, which took place in the month of Chaitra (April). Another ceremony called Varunapanehami was held on the fifth day of Bhadra (July-August) and was connected with the worship of Nagas. The *Nilamatpurana* also records the names of the principal Nagas worshipped in Kashmir, the total number being 527.

That the Nagas were popular deities in Kashmir is testified to by Kalhana. According to him, Kashmir was a land protected by Nila, Sankha and Padma when Buddhism was the predominant faith one of the early kings, Gonanda III, is said to have revived the ancient form of Naga worship as prescribed by *Nilamatpurana*. We have also the legend of Susravas Naga and the mention of Padma Naga the tutelary deity of the Wular lake. Kalhana mentions the annual festival of Taksaka Naga at the village of Zewan which was frequented by dancers and strolling players and thronged by crowds of spectators." Kshemendra also refers to a Taksakayatra festival in *Samyamatrika* (11, 88). That Naga cult prevailed in the Valley long after the Hindu rule is testified to by Abul Fazal who says that there were 700 places of worship where there were carved images of snakes.

No conversions to Islam are recorded by our sources as having

taken place at this stage of the history of Kashmir, and Kalhana gives us repeated records of the establishment of religious foundations by the Kashmir kings even after the fall of this dynasty. There is, however, no doubt that King Harsa's father, Kalasa, also followed evil ways. Four *rajaputras* from the Sahi family were his favourites and he fell under the control of the Tantric guru named Pramadakantha. Kalhana gives all the details of this king's licentiousness and the evil that he practised in the company of these base associates. Our author, though full of remorse at his behaviour, makes no mention of this king's leanings towards Islam but clearly attributes it to his association with the Tantric guru, who even acted as a procurer.³¹ Along with all these practices are mentioned Kalasa's pious foundations³² and his consecration of images of gods. It is also stated that near his end King Kalasa felt great repentance for having caused the destruction of the image of Tamrasvamin, and died at the holy abode of god Surya though he was a worshipper of Siva.³³

We should, however, bear in mind all the influences that worked on Kalasa before we start analysing the attitude of King Harsa. About this tendency on the part of Harsa Prof. Kosambi writes: "The need for money to pay the army (then engaged in a struggle with Pamaras and pretenders) and for metal (which in Kashmir was always in short supply for lack of efficient prospectors) were the only reasons. No theological necessity was discovered, adduced or needed. Harsa did employ *turushka* mercenaries, but showed as great contempt for Islam as for his own religion, by his eating pork."³⁴

As for the, need for money we have already seen that even in the time of King Jayapida there was financial difficulty. The officials (Kayasthas) besought the king to avoid the hardships of universal conquests and to collect instead riches from his own land. Thus he started to oppress his subjects, and in his persistent greed he went so far that for three years he took the whole harvest, including the cultivator's share, and even confiscated the *agraharas* of the Brahmins. King Sankaravarman's oppressive financial exactions have already been referred to. Thus long before the time of the Loharas the avariciousness of the rulers had led them to disregard the privileges of the Brahmins and misappropriate the wealth of the temples.

This tendency surged up again under King Kalasa and reached an extreme limit under Harsa. The avarice and the licentious habits of the previous kings led them to oppress the subjects, but there was no breaking or any sort of defilement of the images of the gods. The need for money was surely even more urgent under Harsa, who was so extravagant and who introduced elegant fashions and maintained a lavish court. All this entailed a huge expense and compelled the king to find out some device to meet this need.

As rightly pointed out by Kosambi, the need for money was made even more pressing by the fact that the king had also to cope with the rising power of the Damaras who were accumulating riches and were usurping more and more power. Ultimately they became so turbulent that this unfortunate king lost his throne, his son and his very life. Kalhana specifically tells us that the money thus secured was used for the efficient running of the various departments of the army. But there was no necessity of causing ordure and urine to be poured on the gods and to cover them with spittings instead of flowers. Harsa's bias towards heresy is proved by his sacrilegious activities and the deliberate defilement of the images of all the *gods* indiscriminately.

Naga Worship

Buddhism did not have the privilege of being the exclusive state religion, but we have enough evidence to show that the successive rulers of Kashmir, their ministers, and their queens, 272 extended their patronage to Buddhism and established Buddhist foundations, even though some of them were Saiva or Vaisnava by faith. The *Rajatarangini* tells us that King Asoka ruled over Kashmir, embraced the Buddhist religion, covered Suskaletra and *vitastatra* with numerous *stupas*, and built *caityas* and *viharas*.³⁵ Buddhism may have entered Kashmir even earlier, for one legendary King Surendra is said to have founded in the neighbourhood of the Darada country a town called Soraka and built a *vihara* called Narendrabhavana and another *vihara* called Saurasa in Kashmir.³⁶ The traditions preserved in Buddhist texts regarding the introduction of Buddhism in Kashmir find corroboration in the *Nilamatapurana*.³⁷ In this Purana, Buddha is made an incarnation of Visnu and in connection with this belief

mention is made of the celebration of the birthday of Buddha as an incarnation of Visnu on the fifteenth day of the bright half of Vaisakha (April-May). On that day it is said that Buddha's statue is to be bathed with water containing herbs, jewels and scents and worshipped with the recitation of the sentences employed by the Sakyas. The place of worship is to be coated with honey. The temple and the *stupa* are to have pictures painted in them. The Sakyas (the Buddhist ascetics) are also to be worshipped and presented with cows, monastic robes (*civara*), food and books.³⁸

Though the Chinese Buddhist scholar Hiuen Tsang does not give us a very favourable picture of the state of Buddhism in Kashmir in the seventh century.³⁹ The fact that the then ruling king of Kashmir came to Kapisa to pay his respects to the Buddhist monk shows his regard for the Buddhist faith.⁴⁰

In the middle of the eighth century, Ou-k'ong found 300 monasteries instead of 100 of Hiuen Tsang's days, and though Vaisnavism was the religion followed by Lalitaditya Muktapida, we have record of the foundation of a number of *viharas* during his reigns.⁴¹ His minister Cankuna took the image of Buddha which Lalitaditya had brought from Magadha and installed it at Srinagar.⁴² The reference to the magic powers of this minister appears to be a symptom of the prevalence of Tantric Buddhism in this time.⁴³

To the reign of Avantivarman (A.D.855/6-83) belonged Sivasvamin, the author of the *Kapphirtabhyudaya*.⁴⁴ Siva svamin's work was inspired by Buddhist teachings. Following the version of the *Avadnasataka* in writing this poem, he has introduced many changes. One of these is that the Buddha appears on the scene as a result of the prayers of King Prasenajit of Kosala, who is unable to withstand the advance of the enemy. The Buddha changes the mind of Prasenajit's enemy, King Kapphina, with a miracle. He preaches the 'law' to him, but when requested by King Kapphina to initiate him into the order, he refuses to do so, but admonishes him to practise selflessness in the discharge of his duties as the ruler of his kingdom.⁴⁵

From the deviation of this legend from the version in the *avadansataka*, Gaurishankar, the editor of this work, has pointed out that the influence of the Hindu ideal of life as found in the laws of

Manu, and the doctrine of 'non-attachment' in the pursuit of one's duties, find full adherence in Sivasamin. The Buddhist ideal of monkhood is replaced by that of the householder who seeks salvation by doing his duties in a spirit of self renunciation.⁴⁶

King Ksemagupta (A.D. 950-68) is said to have burnt down the famous Jayendravihara and utilized the brass of the image of Buddha in the temple of Siva that he erected.⁴⁷ Dr. Sunil Ray and R. C. Mitra look upon the burning of the *vihara* with suspicion, and we believe with the latter that "this fury was perhaps provoked by political factors rather than by motives of religious persecution."⁴⁸ This *vihara* had sheltered the rebel Damara Samgrama and also King Partha (A.D. 906-21) when the latter was dethroned owing to ministerial intrigues.⁴⁹ During the reign of Nandigupta (A.D. 972-73) queen Didda built Vaisnava temples as well as Buddhist *viharas* and consecrated an image of Bodhisattva Padmapani.⁵⁰

Some scholars hold that from the middle of the ninth century till the advent of the eleventh, Buddhism fell on evil days and all kings were anti-Buddhist. It is stated by K. C. Pandey, an authority on Abhinavagupta, that the visit of Samkaracarya, the great Saivite philosopher, took place some time in the second decade of the ninth century, after Samkara had given his final blow to Buddhism in the rest of India.⁵¹ He thinks that this visit purged the local faith of its Buddhist elements, strengthened the position of the new Tantric creed which was brought by the two immigrant families and had already begun to be accepted by the populace, and aroused their curiosity to know more about it.⁵² Wilson has stated that the attempt to introduce Buddhism in Kashmir was combated and finally frustrated by Southern assistance. He also seems to refer here to the visit of Samkara.⁵³ Though the growth of saivism is connected with the reign of Avantivarman (mid-ninth century) and though during the reign of this king, Kalhana does not record much religious activity on the part of Buddhism, we do not find any instances of religious persecution of any sort. Moreover, it was during this time that Sivasvamin wrote *Kapphinabhyudaya* based on a Buddhist theme, though the poem extols the Brahmanical ideal of a householder rather than that of monkhood of the Buddhists. We have already referred to the

reverence shown by the Kashmir kings as well as their queens and ministers and the public towards the teachings of Buddha. Wilson wrote when indology was in its infancy and much research in this field has been made since his days. Pandey followed the older authors and the *Samkaradigvijaya*.⁵⁴ His remarks are not acceptable; for, not to speak of North, even in the South "Buddhism did not crumble down to ruin at the touch of Samkara in the early ninth century A.D. nor was its extinction complete in the twelfth."⁵⁵ Mitra rightly believes that the name of Samkara was devised by later zealots as a plausible human agency with whom to associate the tradition of a heresy-hunt, simply because these authors fashioned the new philosophy in vindication of orthodoxy which seemed to have knocked the bottom out of the Buddhist defence.⁵⁶ He adds: "Though he (Sariikara) fortified Hinduism against the assault of the heretical sects by enrolling missionaries in its defence and organising them into corporate monastic schools ... the legend of his having preached and led a bloody crusade against the Buddhists cannot be sustained."⁵⁷ There is a small poem, *Dasavatara Stotra*, assigned to Samkara, wherein he describes Buddha in worshipful terms as a *yogi*, seated in *padmasana*, in deep meditation, and thereby recognizes his divine character. Suresvara, the disciple of Samkara, also quotes the Buddhist logician Dharmakirti and calls him respectfully a Sakya Punhgava or the eminent Bauddha.⁵⁸ It is even felt "that both the Kashmir schools of Saivism, viz., Spanda and Pratyabhijna that came into being in the ninth and tenth centuries A.D., had been more or less influenced by Buddhism, and this accounts for their being more rational and humane in outlook than all other schools of Saivism in India."⁵⁹ The *Dasavataracarita* of Ksemendra (middle of eleventh century) devoted to the description of the ten incarnations of Visnu includes Buddha also as one.⁶⁰

From Chinese records it is found that in the year A.D.980, a Kashmiri master went to K'ai-feng, the capital of the Sung Empire. Another Kashmirian monk Dharmapaia (A.D.963-1058) went to China from Nalanda and worked there in A.D. 1003-58, This T'ienhsi-tsai translated one hundred and odd canons into Chinese and he was much honored by the ruler. Another Kashmirian monk called Mu-lo-shi-chi went and presented Sanskrit manuscripts and leaf of

Bodhi tree to China in A.D. 1005.

The direct contribution of Kashmirian masters to Buddhism in China and Far Eastern countries embraces both works in translations and religious practices. Their translations of Tantric texts during the tenth and eleventh centuries are very significant. Their contributions on religious practices were mainly concentrated on monastic discipline and Buddhist meditation. Their works and views were respected by Buddhists in China and in the Far East.⁶¹

King Kalasysa (A.D.1063-89) seized the brass images from the Buddhist *viharas*. But in his case we note that the treatment towards other sects was equally bad.⁶² When describing the destruction of gods and the spoliation of the wealth of the temples by King Harsa, Kalhana is particular to name the Buddha statues—one at Parihasapura and the other at Srinagar—which were preserved, together with the images of Hindu gods which shared that distinction.⁶³ It is also of singular interest that Tibetan tradition attributes a Sanskrit poem entitled *Astamahasthanacaityavandanastava* (*Gnas Chen po Brgyad Kyila Phyang tshal ba'i bstod pa*) to King Harsa.⁶⁴ Another work named *Suprabhata Prabhata Stotra* is also attributed to his authorship in the Tangyur.⁶⁵ As regards the atrocity of Harsa, R.C. Mitra believes that it had no peculiar anti-Buddhist bias; while temples were systematically plundered by an officer specially appointed for the purpose, and the cherished idols were demolished and made to roll on night-soil, no such revolting desecration is recorded of Buddhist idols and relics.⁶⁶

But though we know that Harsa spared the two colossal images of Buddha at the interference of Kanaka and Sramana Kusala Sri, we cannot say clearly that he had special regard for Buddhism. The spoliation of the temples and images is a manifestation of his perverted mind rather than of special hatred of any particular religious sect, for among the divine images spared by him are also mentioned those of Ranasvamin and Martanta along with two Buddhist images.⁶⁷ "History of Kashmir Buddhism during this period is characterised by a lively study of Buddhist logic, and Bhavyaraja and Sankarananda are two of the best known products of the Valley in this domain. Of the former, who was a contemporary of King Harsha (A.D.1089-1101), only translations of three works of Dharmottara have found place in the

Tangyur, but his grandiloquent title *Kasmira-nyaya-cudamani* indicates real contributions to Buddhist logic in some original treatise or treatises written by him.⁶⁸ The sparing of the two Colossal statues of Buddha is taken by the authors of Vol.V of the *History and Culture of the Indian People* as a possible evidence of Harsa's pro-Buddhist leanings which they find reflected in his Buddhist Writings.⁶⁹ There is no doubt that the Chinese and Tibetan sources give us evidence about the Buddhist writings of Harsa. Kalhana also testifies to the literary ability of this king and praises his unique skill in composition of all sorts. We have, however, no chronological records to show in which years these works were written. He may have changed his attitude later. When he started the work of spoliation he spared the images of two Hindu gods and two Buddhist, thus it is clear that he had equally turned against all the sects. We believe that at a certain period in his life, he came under some sinister influences and started looting the temples and defiling the images of the gods of all the established sects without any discrimination.

Buddhist foundations are also recorded to the credit of the queen of King Uccala of the second Lohara dynasty.⁷⁰ Uccala's brother and successor King Sussala is credited with the renovation of Didhyhara which had been burnt down by a sudden configuration.⁷¹ We have already referred to the prominence of the religious foundations of King Jayasimha in favour of Buddhism.⁷² This was followed by his ministers and their wives.⁷³

In an earlier quoted work it is stated that Jayasirhha (A.D.1128-55) lacked catholicity of heart, broke up images and burnt down the *Vihara* at Arigon near Srinagar, though it was afterwards rebuilt. "Fortunately", adds the author, "only a few bigots of the type of Jayasimha sat on the throne of Kashmir."⁷⁴ There is no evidence whatsoever regarding the breaking of the images of gods by Jayasimha; he is, on the other hand, credited with a number of new establishments as well as with the renovation of the old ones. There is no trace of his bigotry in the *Rajatarangipi*. The statement we have quoted is based on a stone inscription found at Arigon, written in Sarada characters and dated Laukika Sarhvat 73, or November 1197 A.D. The inscription begins with an invocation to Avalokitesvara.

The object of the inscription is to record the reconstruction by a *vaidya* named Uthana, of a *vihara* built of burnt bricks, to replace a wooden structure which had been burnt down by King Simha. Konow identifies Simha with Jayasimha (A.D. 1128-55), in whose reign Handigrama was burnt down by Suji.⁷⁴ Stein identified Hadigrama with the modern Arigom where the inscription was found.⁷⁵ The burning of the *vihara* does not apparently imply any sort of deliberate persecution of the Buddhists by King Jayasimha, who, on the other hand, is stated by Kalhana to have established Buddhist *viharas* himself. The burning probably took place during the troubles arising out of the intrigues against Sujji. Konow further identifies the Vaidya Uthana with Uthana, the son of Satodeva, who is referred to by Kalhana as a supporter of Sujji.⁷⁶ This inscription clearly shows that Buddhism, was still alive in Kashmir in the end of the twelfth century.

As regards Kalhana's general tendency towards religious toleration and equal reverence for the various religious sects, Stein writes: "It is curious to note side by side with it the manifestly friendly attitude which Kalhana displays towards Buddhism throughout the whole of his chronicle. A long series of kings, from Asoka down to his own time, receives his unstinted praise for the Viharas and Stupas they founded for the benefit of the Buddhist creed. Similar foundations by private individuals are recorded with the same attention. Others, like Meghavahana, are praised for having in accordance with Jina's teachings prohibited the slaughter of animals."⁷⁷ It is not only in the earlier period that we find reference to the Buddhist faith; Kalhana makes numerous references to the images of Buddha claiming special interest. We have already referred to the preservation of Buddha statues by King Harsa together with Hindu gods which shared that distinction.

Referring to the interference of Kanaka, Kalhana's uncle, and the Buddhist *Sramana* Kusalasri, in order to save the Buddha statue, Stein writes: "In view of this company it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Kanaka, too, was personally connected in some way with Buddhist worship."⁷⁸ Kaihana does not hesitate to refer repeatedly to the Bodhisattvas or to the Buddha himself as the comforters of all beings, the embodiments of perfect charity and nobility of feeling. They are, to him, beings of absolute goodness who do not feel anger

even against the sinner but in patience render him kindness.⁷⁹ As late as the reign of King Jayasimha, when Buddhism was declining in India, we find mention of belief in Buddhism in Kashmir. Tired of the terrible exactions of Citraratha, the revenue minister, the subjects decided to kill him, saying "the destruction of one wicked person is called lawful when all are helped by it. Even the Jina (Buddha) slew a great snake which killed living beings."⁸⁰ Though it is not possible to trace the Buddhist legend here alluded to, it is enough to tell us of the reverence with which Buddha and his life were held by the people of Kashmir even as late as Kalhana's own time. Thus Kalhana also shows us his thorough familiarity with special points of Buddhist traditions and terminology.

Ksemendra, along with his Hindu writings, composed the *Bodhisattvavadanakalpalata* a collection of Jataka stories. His son Somendra, in the introduction to this work, tells us that his father composed it at the request of a Brahmin, Sajjanananda and his friend Nakka.⁸¹ Ksemendra undertook the work but left it after writing three *avadanas*, as the work seemed too lengthy; but being instructed by the Tathagata himself in a dream, Ksemendra composed 107 tales (*pallavas*). Viryabhadrā, an authority on Buddhist texts, also helped him. The 108th tale was added by his son Somendra, who also provided an introduction. The work illustrates six perfections of the Bodhisattva—charity, moral character "patience, diligence, contemplation and wisdom."⁸² Somendra in his introduction to the tale of Jimutavahana, his additional *palava*, says: "Those well-known *viharas*, gorgeous with the array of pictures pleasing to the eye, have passed away in the course of time. But the *vihara* of moral merit, excellent and delightful, erected by my father, in which the *Avadanās*, with weighty meanings underlying them, are carried out, as it were, and painted with variegated colours by the pencil of the goddess of learning, will not perish even at the end of time, not even by the ravages of fire or of water."⁸³

It appears that there was not much Buddhist building activity in this period and the *viharas* of old had decayed by the passage of time and the ravages of fire and flood. But the words echo the great reverence with which Buddhism was held by Somendra and the country of

Kashmir. The *Kathasaritsagara* is also full of Buddhist features.⁸⁴ That Sakya Sri, *pandita* of Kashmir, presented the *Bodhisattvavadanakalpalata* to the Kun- dgah-rgyal Mtshan, the Lama of Tibet in 1202, shows the regard with which Buddhism was held in Kashmir as late as the beginning of the thirteenth century.⁸⁵

R. C. Mitra, who has made a detailed survey of the decline of Buddhism in India, believes that Buddhism was in a prosperous condition in Kashmir in the eleventh century. He does not agree with Voucher who thought that "Buddhism at this time was singularly enfeebled."⁸⁶ We do not agree with Mitra, however, that Buddhism was in a really flourishing condition and that there was no laxity. We find definite signs of laxity, and evidence of magic and exorcisms, the arid pedantry and mystic cobwebs of the Tantric imagination.⁸⁷

Tantricism

The Tantras, inculcating the worship of the Mother Goddess in her various forms, constitute a considerable body of literature.⁸⁸ The Tantric literature essentially represents a very important part of Indian spiritual lore, so far as its practical aspect is concerned.⁸⁹ *Tanyate vistaryate jnanam anena iti tantram*— according to this derivation of the word *tantra* from *tan* 'to spread', it is defined as the Sastra by which knowledge (*jnana*) is spread... The end of the practical methods which these Sastras employ is to spread Vedantic *jnana*. The end is substantially one; the means to that end vary according to knowledge, capacity and temperament.⁹⁰

The word *tantra* by itself simply means a 'treatise' and not necessarily a religious scripture. In its latter meaning it may mean the scripture of several divisions of worshippers who vary in doctrine and practice. Thus there are Tantras of Saivas, Vaisnavas, and Saktas and of various subdivisions of these.⁹¹ It is a cultural discipline in a wider sense, and when used in a more limited sense, it is spiritual knowledge of a technical nature.⁹²

The Tantras form the fourth section of the Hindu scriptures in order of inspiration and authority, the other three being Sruti, Smṛti and Purana. They are also known as the fifth Veda by those who

regard them as authoritative and observe the ritual which they enjoin.⁹³ Kulluka Bhatta commenting on Manu says that Sruti is two fold—Vedic and Tantric.⁹⁴ The Tantra is regarded as a Sruti or Agama, i.e., 'revelation', as opposed to a Smṛti or Nigama, i.e., 'tradition.' It is thus classed with Vedas and is usually defined as *Srutisakhavisesah*, a particular branch of the Vedas.⁹⁵ The religious attitude in the Tantras is fundamentally the same as in the Vedic ritual. The Tantric *sadhana* also concerns the attainment of ascendancy over the forces of nature by the exoteric ritual of the Vedic type, as well as by the esoteric ritual involving the yogic practice, its aim being the union of the two principles, the Siva and the Sakti.⁹⁶ According to another rendering, "The aim of the Tantra is the awakening of the cosmic energy latent in man and taking it through mystic planes to unite it with Siva for the consummation of the mantra SAHAM: 'She I am'; and thence to the Vedantic realization of SOHAM, 'He I am'.

The Tantras, which succeed and are in part dependent on the Puranas, are also in part unrelated to the latter and are of considerable antiquity. In their present form they are usually ascribed to sixth or seventh century. Tantric usages and practical formulae were current and were practiced in a much earlier age, for they belong to a type of thought that varies little among primitive peoples in the course of centuries.⁹⁷ But though their practices are undoubtedly very ancient, nearly all authorities ascribe the growth of Tantric literature to a later period. It was only from about the fifth or sixth century A.D. that Tantricism as a special religious or philosophical school gradually arose. The worship of the Mothers and references to the Dakinis attending them may be traced back to the Gangadhar inscription of the fifth century A.D.⁹⁸ and images of the Mothers referred to in the *brhatsamhita*.⁹⁹ According to Bhattacharya also the Tantras of the Agama type were prevalent during the first five or six centuries of the Christian era, from the Kusana period down to the end of the Gupta period.¹⁰⁰

The religion of the Agamas (Siva Tantras) apparently developed through two channels: one exoteric and the other esoteric. The former was continued as pure Saivism with greater emphasis on the devotional aspect of the worship of Siva-Pasupati, with a view to attaining salvation.

The latter was continued as Saktism, with greater emphasis on the various Sakti cults, not so much to attain salvation as to gain ascendancy over the forces of nature, and to carry on experiments with them in order to gain a detailed knowledge of their working. Salvation was too small a goal for the latter. The later literature of pure Saivism ceases to be called Tantra. Tantra proper became more Saktic in character and this character of Tantra became definitely established by the tenth century A.D.¹⁰¹

According to the geographical classification of the Tantras given in the *Sammoha Tantra*, they are divided into four classes, viz., Kerala, Kasmira, Gauda and Vilasa—the Kasmira class prevailing in all countries from Madra to Nepal.¹⁰²

According to Tantric philosophy, Anandabhairava or Mahabhairava, which is the name given by Tantricians to Siva, is the soul of, or is composed of, the nine groups of substances (*vyuhas*) of which the world is made up; such as time and its various forms (*kalavyuha*), existing things like the blue substance (*kulavyuha*), names (*namavyuha*). Perception (*jnanavyuha*), and the five faculties, viz., consciousness, heart, will, intelligence and mind (*cittavyuha*). Mahabhairava is the soul of the goddess, therefore, she also in turn is the soul of, or composed of, the nine collections. Both, therefore, constitute one entity. When there is *samyarasa*, or community of joy or intense love between them, creation follows. The female element, or Mahabhairavi, however, is predominant in the process of creation, and the male element or Mahabhairava, in the work of destruction.¹⁰³ This sect, therefore, looks upon every woman as an incarnation of the Universal Mother, to whom proper respect should be paid.

The term *guru* stands for the religious preceptor who gives *diksa* or sectarian initiation to his disciples. The Mother Goddess is propitiated and eventually attained by assuming the vow (*diksa*) of devoted worship of her. The first step to salvation consists in fully concentrating the mind on the *devi* as sitting on the lap of Siva in the Mahapadmavana (a garden of lotuses), as possessed of a body which is pure joy and is the original cause of all, and as identical with one's own self.¹⁰⁴

The second stage is *cakrapuja*, or worship by means of the mystic

circles, which is the *bahyayaga*, or material worship; and the third consists in studying and knowing the true doctrine. The second is the proper 'Sakta ceremonial.'¹⁰⁵ This consists in the worship of a diagram of the female organ drawn in the centre of another consisting of a representation of nine such organs, the whole of which forms the *sricakra*.¹⁰⁶ Tantric *sadhana* is based on a very profound knowledge of the principles of psychology. "The Tantra considers each and every principle or *tattva* of our being as a divinity and the whole of our being as an assembly of several dynamic forces, each force having the form of a *Devata*. For each *Devata*, it attributes a particular mantra and yantra or *cakra*. For instance, the Sriyantra is adapted for the worship of Lalitha Sakti. The *cakra* contains nine triangles one within the other, enclosed in circles and petals. The four triangles pointing upwards represent Siva and five pointing downwards Sakti. The triangles represent the play of creation, protection and absorption of the Universe by the Suddha Sakti, the Pure Divine Force ... the central point of the *cakra* is Bindu which represent the unity of Siva with Sakti, Kameswara with Kameswari."¹⁰⁷ The *matrcakras* or the 'circles of the Mothers' represent the sensual form in which she is the object of worship with the school of Saktas, who are so called because they are worshippers of Sakti.¹⁰⁸ This system we find referred to in the mention of *matrcakras* and *devicakras* in Kashmir.¹⁰⁹

To the worship of Devi, the goddess, who is the joyously creative energy of nature, belong the five true things (*pancatattva*) through which mankind enjoys gladly, preserves its life, and procreates; intoxicating drink (*madira*) which is a great medicine to man, a breaker of sorrows and a source of pleasure; meat (*mamsa*) of the animals in the villages, in the air or in the forests, which is nutritious and strengthens the force of body and mind; fish (*matsya*) which is tasty and augments procreative potency; roasted corn (*mudra*)¹¹⁰ which is easily obtained, grows in the earth and is the root of life in the three worlds; and fifthly physical union (*maithuna*) with Sakti—the source of the bliss of all living beings and the deepest cause of creation and the root of the eternal worlds.¹¹¹ This Tantric *pancatattva* ritual was interpreted and adopted by the sensual people in their own interest. Hence Monier Williams describes the faith of the Saktas, or the

worshippers of the feminine deities as a mixture of sanguinary sacrifices and orgies with wine and women.¹¹² According to Bhattacharya, the worship of Sakti, the fierce goddess, existed as an independent religious cult among certain wild tribes and it was only at a later stage that it was brought into close contact with the Siva worship. As a matter of fact, by the side of Vaisnavism and Saivism, Saktism also commanded a large following. Bloody sacrifices and sexual orgies of the Tantrics are some of the distinctive features of the Sakti worship.¹¹¹ Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati opines: "Tantra is wrongly stigmatised as a libidinous phallic necromancy. This is due to instances of the excesses of some misguided Vamamargins. The real Tantrika is neither a cynic nor cryonic hedonist. He is rather an endaemonist than a slave to passions. The much-ridiculed five M's are only esoteric symbolologies. Wine is the lunar ambrosia flowing from the Soma Cakra. Woman is the Kundalini 'Sakti sleeping in the lower plexus', Muladhara. *Matsya* is the annihilation of 'I' and 'Mine'. *Mamsa* is the surrender of the limited human to the unlimited Divine. Mudra is cessation from evils. *Maidhana* (*sic*) is the union of the Sakti with the Siva in man. In Tantras, woman is not considered as an object of animal passion and pleasure. Tantrikas consider woman as Parasakti. She is deified and adored. If there is one science that has explored the divine regions of man and woman, in detail, it is Tantra."¹¹²

Barth admits that the cult of the Mother is based on a deep meaning and that the Tantras are also full of theosophical and moral reflections and ascetic theories, but is not thereby prevented from saying that "a Sakta of the left hand is almost always a hypocrite and a superstitious debauchee, but there can be no doubt that among the authors of these contemptible catechetical books there were more than one who sincerely believed that they were performing a work of sanctity."¹¹³ The worship of the 'Mothers', which is identical with that of the Saktis, plays an important part in the Tantra ritual which has flourished in Kashmir from ancient times. Mystical diagrams are prepared and worshipped to this day in Kashmir according to the rules of the Tantrasastra, both in private houses and temples. Of supposed natural (*Svabhavika*) *cakras* of the kind, the *Sricakra* on the Sarikaparvata in Srinagara and the Jvalamukhicakra on the rocky hills

above Uyen (*Skt.* Ovana) in the Vihi Pargana receive special reverence.¹¹⁴

In the *Rajatarangini* it is said that Isanadevi, the queen of the legendary King Jalauka, established circles sacred to the Mothers (*matracakra*), which were distinguished by their spiritual power, at the 'gates' of Kashmir and other places. Kashmir tradition represents King Jalauka as the son and successor of Asoka. A son of Asoka by this name cannot be traced in any of the available sources, but the location of the *agrabhara* founded by him at Varabala (the present Baravul) and of the circles attributed to his queen Isanadevi can be identified.¹¹⁵ The date of this king, whether or not he was the son of Asoka, was evidently very early, and hence the existence of this cult too can be taken as very early compared with the later dates assigned to the Tantric system in its final form.

King Baka of Mihirakula's lineage is said to have once met a sorceress named Bhatta, who, having assumed the appearance of a lovely woman, approached the king one evening and lured him to accept her invitation to view the wonders of her sacrificial feast. When he came the next morning along with his hundred sons and grandsons, she made of him a sacrificial offering to the "circle of the Goddess" (*devicakra*). Kalhana tells us that even in his time there was seen on a rock the double impression of her knees, showing where, on attaining supernatural power as a result of this human sacrifice, she had risen to the sky, and the story was kept alive in the *mathas* of Kheri (the present Khur) by the image of god Satakapalesa, by the 'circle of the Mothers', and by that rock.¹¹⁶ The story suggests that Tantric practices were known in Kashmir at an early date and that they were practiced in their most fierce forms. Though the tale of King Baka becoming a victim in this way may be a mere folk legend, it certainly points to the probability that some of the earlier kings took part in the Tantric rites.

Moreover, this is an example of the worship of the goddess in her most fierce form, in which she is associated with the schools of *kapalikas* and *kalamukhas* and animals and human-beings are sacrificed.¹¹⁵ Another king of Mihirakula's race, Narendraditya I, had a *guru* named Ugra, who was the recipient of divine favours and constructed the shrine of Siva Ugresa and a 'circle of the Mothers'.¹¹⁶ The son of

Meghavahana, the first prince of the restored Gonanda dynasty, was Sresthasena, whom the people called Pravarasena I and Tunjina II. He is said to have constructed the shrine of Pravaresvara together with a circle of the Mothers (*matrcakra*).¹¹⁷ The worship of the 'circle of Mothers' (*matrcakra*) along with the construction of Bhairava temples continued during the, time of King Avantivarman (A.D.855/56-883), when idealistic monism had become more popular.¹¹⁸

The *Sammoha Tantra* mentions three classes of Tantras According to the nature of their *sadhanas* : *divya*, *kaula* and *Vama*.¹¹⁹ In Ksemendra's works we find mention of Kaula school.¹²⁰ In the eleventh century, the Kaula schools were quite Developed, comprising a number of sects. *Kula* stands for Sakti, and so the Kaula schools were Sakti in character.¹²¹

A very grim picture of how this subtle philosophy and its ritual could be misused is presented by Kalhana, though with great regrets, in his account of King Kalasa (A.D.1063-89). His *guru* was a Tantricit, Pramadakantha, the son of a Brahmin named Amarakantha. Kalhana praises the father while he deplores the evils of the son. We have here evidence of the existence of the sober worship of the god Siva, the auspicious, and of the Tantric ceremonial in its most hideous form, side by side. Kalhana relates that this teacher (*guru*), who was evilly disposed by nature to wicked practices, made King Kalasa ignore the distinction between women who are approachable and those who are not. *This guru* is said to have lived in incest with his own daughter.¹²² Next, Kalhana mentions another swindler, nicknamed the 'cat-merchant', from the fact that he kept a pet cat who acquired reputation as a Tantric *guru* and made even honorable and learned men (*bhattapada*), who knew how to behave fearlessly at the great Tantricrites (*mahasamaya*), bend their knees in fear.¹²³ This *guru* also posed as a physician. Thus the Tantric ceremonies (*mahasamaya*) associated with the worship of Sakti tended to become a ruse for debauchery and Kalasas licentiousness induced him to follow the basest possible forms of the religious practice degenerating into obscenity. Hence one would be inclined to agree with Barth's saying that "a Sakta of the left hand is almost always a hypocrite and a superstitious debauchee."¹²⁴ Such sinister developments seem to have

created a feeling of disgust in Kalhana's mind too, though not so much at the Tantric school as such as at its false *gurus*.¹²⁵ He mentions with reverence those kings and queens who established *matrcakras* and *sricakras*.¹²⁶

Ksemendra also, while describing the life of a clerk (*niyogi*) in his *Narmamala*, tells us that he was formerly a Buddhist, later became a Vaisnava, but for the welfare of his wife he had recourse to *kaulacara*, and instituted a *yaga* for the restoration of her health. In this ceremony, the important figure is the guru, who is the spiritual teacher not only of the Kayastha and his widowed sister but also of the prostitute who resorts to him to get amulets etc., for the preservation of her body of the old trader who every now and then consults him for various purposes; of the country surgeon of a very low position; and lastly of a third rate eye-specialist.¹²⁷ In the same context appear to be associated the base superstitions and the practices of witchcraft (*abbicara*) by which so many kings and heirs-apparent are stated to have been killed.¹²⁸ *Abbicara* means dark or magical practices performed with a view to injuring or destroying others. Even Marco polo in the late thirteenth century noticed the acquaintance of the Kashmirians with the devilries of witchcraft and enchantment.¹²⁹ Thus in Kashmir of the period under review we find the subtlest philosophy combined with the grossest possible absurd and repulsive superstitions.

On the magic practices frequently referred to in the Tantric literature of later time Bhattacharya's view "that in many cases they are derived from the religious practices of a primitive society assimilated into the Vedic society; but, logically speaking they also represent a phase of the Vedic ritual, not practiced for higher spiritual purposes, but for certain lower ends in which a group of people had always some interest"¹³⁰ fits in very well with the prevalence of magic practices of the Tantricians in Kashmir especially when we remember that the Brahmanical society was brought to settle among the primitive Kashmir population.

SAIVISM

Commenting on the date of the appearance of Saivism in Kashmir, J. C. Chatterjee writes: "In Kashmir itself—where even the most orthodox

followers of the Shivagama admit that the Trika-Shasana first appeared (or, as they put it, reappeared) about the beginning of the ninth Christian century—Shivagama is regarded as of high antiquity, indeed of eternal existence like the Vedas.¹³¹ The growth of Kashmir Saivism is thus connected with the reign of King Avantivarman (middle of ninth century) who is much praised by Kalhana for his peaceful government and patronage of learning. The introduction or origin of the Kashmir Saivite philosophy as such did not come as a revolt against the existing religious thoughts and practices, but as a natural accompaniment of the growth of learning, leading to the development of Siva-sutra literature. We have clearly shown above that the various religious sects of Saivism, Buddhism and Vaisnavism flourished together quite amicably in Kashmir. Even the Kashmir kings do not appear to have been very rigid as regards their religious beliefs and outward forms of worship. This is illustrated by the fact that King Avantivarman (A.D. 855/6-883) out of regard for his able minister Sura, though a Vaisnava at heart, outwardly worshipped Siva, and this secret he revealed only at the time of his death.¹³²

Kashmir Saivism has two branches—the Spandasāstra and the Pratyabhijñāsastra. The authorship of the basic text of the first school is attributed to Vasugupta and his pupil Kallata. The two principal works of the system are the *Sivasūtras*¹³³ and the *Spandakarikas* or *Spandasūtras*, which consist of fifty-one verses only. The *Sivasūtras* form, from the Trika (Kashmir Saivite) point of view, the most important part of the Āgamasāstra. Their authorship is attributed to Siva himself, while they are said to have been revealed to the sage Vasugupta.¹³⁴ The Spandasāstra lays down the main principles of the system in greater detail and in a more amplified form than the *Sivasūtras*, hardly, however, entering into philosophical reasoning in their support. The Spandasāstra is attributed by Kṣemarāja to Vasugupta himself, but it was more probably composed by the latter's pupil, Kallata.¹³⁵ Bhaṭṭa Kallata lived in the reign of King Avantivarman (A.D. 855/6-883); the founder of the Utpalā dynasty of Kashmir.¹³⁶ A commentary called *Spandasarvasva* on his teacher's *Spandakarikas* was discovered by Bühler during his search for Sanskrit manuscripts in Kashmir.¹³⁷

Vasugupta and Somananda are regarded as the human founders

of the Trika or Advaita saivism which is peculiar to Kashmir. Of these two, while Vasugupta gave out the doctrines merely as revelations and articles of faith,¹³⁸ Somananda who was probably a pupil of Vasugupta, laid the foundation of the philosophical side of the school. We know something about Vasugupta from his pupils, who tell us that he lived in the charming valley of Sadardhavana, the modern Harvan stream, behind the Shalimar garden near Srinagar. The work of Somananda was carried on in greater detail by Utpala and Abhinavagupta, the chief exponents of the Pratyabhijña philosophy.¹³⁹ Somananda tells us about his lineage that once Srikantha (Siva), while roaming over Mount Kailasa, was touched with pity for suffering humanity which was immersed in spiritual darkness caused by the disappearance of Saivagamas. He therefore instructed the sage Durvasas to revive the Saivite teaching.

The sage accordingly divided all the Saivagamas into three classes according as they taught monism, dualism or monism-cum-dualism, and imparted their doctrines to his mind-born sons—Tryambaka, Amardaka and Srinatha respectively. Somananda represents himself as the nineteenth descendant of Tryambaka, the founder of the Advaita Tantric School. Somananda's fourth ancestor named Samgamaditya came in the course of his wanderings to Kashmir and settled there. The name of the three descendants between Samgamaditya and Somananda in the order of succession are Varsaditya, Arunaditya and Ananda.¹⁴⁰

The other family which, about two centuries later, in the second half of the tenth and first quarter of the eleventh century, was to produce the great Saiva philosopher Abhinavagupta, migrated from Kanyakubja (Kanauj) to Kashmir. The earliest ancestor of Abhinavagupta was Atrigupta, who lived in Antar-vedi, the region between the Ganges and the Yamuna rivers, in the reign of King Yasovarman of Kanauj (early eighth century). He was well-known for his proficiency in all branches of learning and in the Saiva Sastra in particular. King Lalitaditya (c. A.D. 725-761) was so much impressed with his scholarship that he brought him to Kashmir and settled the family in a spacious house on the bank of the river Vitasta (Jhelum) with a large grant of land for their maintenance. His father,

Narasinthagupta, alias Cukhulaka, was an avowed devotee of Siva and proficient in all Sastras.¹⁴¹

The usual form of Saiva worship to which the Brahmanic section of Kashmir society adhered during the period under review was this Idealistic Monism of the Advaita Saiva school as expressed in the worship of Ardhanarisvara, representing god Siva in his union with Parvati. The introductory verses prefixed to each book of the *Rajatarangini* contain prayers addressed to Siva in this form. Kalhana also mentions his father Canpaka's visits to the *tirthas* of Nandiksetra, all of which are sacred to Siva.¹⁴² Kalyana, whom we have identified with Kalhana, was the teacher of Jayaratha, the commentator of the *Tantraloka* of Abhinavagupta, the great Kashmirian Saivite philosopher.¹⁴³ The Saiva system of Kashmir, known as the Trikasasana in the ancient philosophical literature of India, upholds, as its lame indicates, the existence of three ultimate principles—Siva, the Supreme Being, Sakti, a personal entity of the nature of perfect egoist, and *Anu*, the individual soul under the bondage of impurities of limitations. Of these three, the exponents of the Trika schools have brought the idea of Sakti into greater prominence. Siva is the Supreme Entity. He is the all-doing, all-knowing, serene lord, all-pervading, indivisible and infinite. In him remains His Sakti, or nature, in a sort of reflex relation if Self identity."¹⁴⁴ Then as he comes to possess the tendency of projecting Himself, His Sakti evolves from Him in the form of Divine Creative Will.¹⁴⁵ The *Malinivijayottara Tantra* speaks of both Siva and Sakti as beyond the *turya* or the fourth state *taruatita*.¹⁴⁶ "Looked at from this point of view", writes Das "Sakti is not at all an entity different from the Parama Siva and does not stand in any (external) relation to him."¹⁴⁷

In his *Paramarthasara*, Abhinavagupta says : Creation, maintenance and dissolution, *waking* (*Jagrat*), dreaming (*svapna*) and dreamless sleep (*susupti*), appear in Him in the Fourth Abode; but He reveals Himself under their covering."¹⁴⁸ The above conditions are present as phenomena in the consciousness of the Lord in the 'Fourth stage, (i.e., the waking state is the Universe because of differentiation; dreaming sleep is illumination', because of the greatness of the light, the state of dreamless slumber is that of 'Understanding', for it is compact of

knowledge; above there is the 'Fourth'¹⁴⁹ the state of Sadasiva), in which He is pure Bliss, the state of Infinite egoity, from which, the phenomena of the three lower states of consciousness derive their character. Their presence does not suppress this real nature, for He reveals Himself everywhere as higher than they, as the universal subject of perception, under all conditions infinite in essence."¹⁵⁰

"Sakti", says Jayaratha, the commentator of Abhinavagupta, "is the very Saktimat Himself. But her difference from Him is held only by a sort of transference of epithet by reason of the difference in her evolutes."¹⁵¹ Almost all the definitions of Sakti given by Saiva writers try to explain the world of phenomena both mental and material, not from a static point of view as a mass of lifeless inert matter but from a dynamic viewpoint as a vast storehouse of one energy manifesting itself as partly potential and partly active.¹⁵² "Looked at from this new point of view of the Kashmere (*sic*) Saivites the whole external world of cognisable or matter interpreted as having its origin from Sakti as a particular mode of conscious reflection of objectivity (*idantaparamarsa*) comes to be imbued with life force, and apparelled in the garb of truth and reality (not Maya or illusion) and appears in a perfectly glorious light to the devotee (*sadhaka*)."¹⁵³ The idea does not appear to be altogether new when we remember the verse from *Nilamatapurana*, repeated in the *Rajatarangini* where Krsna says: "Kashmir land is Parvati; know that its king is a portion of Siva."¹⁵⁴ The whole land of Kashmir is the Sakti of the god Siva or the externalization of the conscious Siva as the object of His own self-enjoyment. Here is a clear evidence of the idea of Sakti (*Parvati*) being applied to the whole of the world of the philosophy of life of the people of Kashmir. Thus the idea was wide-spread but was expounded clearly in philosophical form by the later writers like Kallata, Somananda Abhinavagupta. They clearly showed that the whole world has its roots deeply implanted in the Supreme Being Siva and is therefore naturally a reality. Consistent with this principle, the Kashmiri Saivites did not accept *Maya* as an independent entity. Abhinavagupta defined it as nothing but "His power of absolute freedom in the manifestation of manifold appearances—an external manifestation of the Supreme free will (*svatantrya*) of the Lord Siva."

The aim of these philosophers in asserting the reality of the phenomenal world as a manifestation of the Divine was to harmonise the full bodied principle of Sakti with the conception of supreme Reality—the god Siva—so that the philosophy might not be interpreted in terms of dualistic dvaita principles.¹⁵⁵

In the *sivadrsti* Somananda discusses and puts forth briefly his views as the first known exponent of the Idealistic Monism of the Saiva school of the Indian philosophy. The title of the work is significant enough to express clearly that he wants to bring home to this readers the realization of the whole universe as the manifestation of one Absolute Reality called Siva, the All-Blissful.¹⁵⁶ The aim of this system of Idealistic Monism, like that of Vedanta, is to help the individual in self-realization; and the means also by which this end is to be achieved is the same as that of Vedanta, viz., removing the veil of ignorance. But the two systems differ in their conceptions of self-realization because their ideas of the apparent (*abhāsa*, i.e. the Universe) are different. While the Vedanta holds that the Universe is unreal, the Realistic Idealism of the Kashmiris maintains it to be real, because it is a manifestation of the Ultimate. Therefore, while according to the former, all that we known disappears at the time of self-realization, according to the latter, the objective universe stands even when the self is realized, but is known in its true perspective. This kind of realization is spoken of as Recognition (*pratyabhijñā*)¹⁵⁷ and hence the name *pratyabhijñā* was used for the philosophy of Kashmir. With all its purity and subtlety Kashmir Saivism is very rightly considered more humane and rational than some other saiva schools such as those of the *kapalikas* and *kalamukhas*.¹⁵⁸

VAISNAVISM

Visnu is a Vedic deity. There are but few hymns addressed to Him in the *Rgveda* but his personality is by no means unimportant. The long strides, which he takes, and the three steps by which he measures the universe are always described with an enthusiastic spirit.¹⁵⁹ In the *Nilamatapurana*, the earliest extant religious book of the Kashmiris, nearly 500 verses are devoted to the description of *tirthas*

connected with Visnu.¹⁶⁰ Though Siva was the supreme deity, Visnu was nevertheless widely worshipped, as is shown by the space devoted to his shrines in this text.

Pandey believes Krsna himself to have been taken by the Saivas as a follower of the Trika, on the basis of the fact that in the *Harivamsa Purana* we are told that Krsna was taught the sixty-four monistic Saivagamas by sage Durvasas.¹⁶¹ Though the Puranas are quite later, the Kashmiri *Nilamatapurana* which we have referred to above is the earliest extant work about Kashmir faiths and the reference wherein Krsna himself declares that the land of Kashmir is Parvati and its ruler the god Siva's part, seems to refer to quite early times.¹⁶²

The *Dasavataracarita* of Ksemendra is devoted to the description of the ten incarnations (*avatars*) of Vignu—Matsya (fish), Kurma (tortoise), Varaha (boar), Narasimha (man-lion), Vamana (dwarf), Parsurama, Srirama, Srikrna, Buddha and Kalki.¹⁶⁴ The most interesting is the reference to Buddha as an incarnation of Visnu. The *Nilamatapurana* also refers to Buddha as such and prescribes the celebration of his birthday in the bright half of the month of Vaisakha when Pusya constellation is in conjunction with the moon. All the details of the method, of such a celebration have also been mentioned.¹⁶³ In the writings of Abhinavagupta there are many quotations from the *Bhagavadgita* and also references to Krsna as *guru*. The *Bhagavadgitarthasamgraha* of Abhinavagupta gives a summary of the subject-matter of the *Bhagavadgita* and claims to explain its hidden and true import.¹⁶⁵

We have already related the reverence shown by the Kashmir kings to Sun-god. The worship of Surya in Kashmir is associated with the famous Martanda's temple, said to have been built by King Lalitaditya.¹⁶⁶ This temple has a three-headed image—a symbol of the Sun as Brahma, or the creator in the morning. The Visnu or the preserver at noon, and Siva or the destroyer at evening. The four arms are typical of Visnu-surya worship.¹⁶⁷ This makes it clear that the worship of the Sun was closely related to that of Visnu, and the two gods may well have been often thought of as one. We have already related the story about Visnu being considered in Kashmir as the very Sakti of god Siva.¹⁶⁸ Here we find, what we stated at the outset, that

there is always great similarity under the superficial differences; and this also accounts for the harmonious existence of the various cults side by side.

NOTES

1. Rajat., IV. 188-203.
2. Rajat., IV. 207-209.
3. *Ibid.*, VI. 137-41.
4. *Ibid.*, VI. 171-73.
5. *Ibid.*, VI. 304.
6. *Ibid.*, VII. 180-85. For banalinga (sacred stone emblem of Siva), refer plate VII.
7. *Ibid.*, VII. 524-27.
8. Rajat., VIII. 76-79.
9. *Ibid.*, VIII. 580.
10. *Ibid.* VIII. 2402.
11. *Ibid.* VIII. 2410.
12. *Ibid.*, VIII. 2415-17.
13. *Ibid.*, VIII. 3316-18.
14. *Ibid.*, VIII, 2409.
15. *Ibid.* VIII. 3316-18.
16. *Ibid.*, VIII. 2438.
17. Darvabhisara—territory between Vitasia and Candrabhaga. Stein, Rajat vol. I, 1-180, note.
18. Rajat., VIII. 2430-32.
19. Rajat., VII. 3354.
20. *Ibid.*, VIII. 3368-70.
21. *Ibid.*, VIII. 3352-53.

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22. *Supra*, p. 142.
23. *Rajat.*, VII.695-96.
24. *Ibid.*, VII.709-5.
25. *Rajat.*, VII.1091-96.
26. *Ibid.*, VII.1712.
27. *Ibid.*, VII. 1091.
28. Basham, A. L. *Harsa of Kashmir and the Iconoclast Ascetics*, reprint from the BSO AS, vol. XII, parts 3 & 4, 1948. p. 688.
29. Stein, *Rajat.* vol. I, VII.1095, note.
30. Mitra, R. C., *Decline of Buddhism in India*, p. 23.
31. *Rajat.*, VII.273ff. The term guru stands for the religious preceptor who gives diksa or sectarian initiation to his disciple.
32. *Rajat.*, VII.524-32.
33. *Ibid.*, VII.722
34. Kosambi, D. D., *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*, p. 337.
35. *Rajat.*, I.101-2. The Blue Annals of Tibet also mention Asoka and his propagation of the Buddhist faith in Kashmir. *JASB*, 1848. pp. 23-25.
36. *Rajat.*, I.93-94. Cf. Walters, T., *Travels*, vol. I, p. 265.
37. *Nitamata.*, vs. 684-89.
38. *Nilamata.*, vs. 684-89. This description is exactly like that given in the *Krtyaratnakara* (pp.159-60), quoted in Kane's *History of Dharma Shastra*, vol. II, p.722. The ceremonies for the worship of the Buddha are similar though the day mentioned for his worship is seventh day from the full moon of Vaisakha (April-May).
39. Beal, S., *Si-Yu-Ki*, vol. I, p. 158, vide Stein. *Rajat.*, vol. I, p. 87; Bapat. P. V. (ed.), *2500 Years of Buddhism*, pp. 268-69.
40. Stein, *Rajat.*, III.355, note; Real, S., *Life of H. T.*, pp. 69-71.
41. *Rajat.*, IV.200, 203, 210.
42. *Ibid.* IV.215. 259-62.
43. *Ibid.*, IV.249-53; see Majumdar, R. C (ed.). *The Struggle for Empire*, p. 420.
44. *Rajat.* V.34.

45. *Kapphina.*, ch.XVIII 14I-51; ch. XIX.1-45; ch.XX.1-42,
46. *Ibid*, Intro., pp. XXIV-XXV.
47. *Rajat.*, VI 171 ff.
48. *JBRs* June 1955, p. 178; also see Ray, S. C., *EHCK* (2nd ed.), p.166; Mitra, R. C., *Decline of Buddhism in India*, p. 22.
49. *Rajat.*, V.428; VI. 171-73.
50. *Ibid*. VI.300-3; Kak, R. C., *Handbook*, p. 70; Goetz, H-, *Marg.*, 1955, vol. VIII, p. 72. For the worship of Bodhisattvas as a feature of Mahayana Buddhism, see Eliot, C., *Hinduism and Buddhism*, vol. II, pp. 13-15. 72-73.
51. Pandey, K. C., *Abhinavagupta*, p. 88 (p. 151 of 2nd ed.).
52. Pandey, K. C., *op. cit.*, p. 90 (2nd ed., p. 153).
53. *Supra* pp. 264-65.
54. Pandey, K. C., *op. cit.*, p. 88 (p. 151, 2nd ed.); vide *Sankaradigvijaya*, ch. XVI, pp. 54-80.
55. Mitra, R. C., *op. cit.*, p. 103.
56. *Ibid.*, pp. 128-30.
57. *Ibid*.
58. *Memoirs of ASI*, vol. xxvi, p. 5; also see Eliot, C. *Hinduism and Buddhism*, vol. II, pp. 75, 110.
59. Majumdar, R. C, (ed.). *The Struggle for Empire*, p. 421.
60. For Dasavataracarita of Ksemendra, see *infra*, under vaisnavism.
61. Jan-Yun-Hua, *Kashmir's Contribution to the Expansion of Buddhism in the Far East*, *IHQ*, XXXVII, Nos. 2 and 3, 1961, pp. 93-104.
62. *Rajat.* VII 696,
63. *Rajat.*, VII. 1097 ff.
64. *IHQ*, 1941, pp. 223ff., quoted by R. C. Mitra, *op. cit.*, p. 23. It is clear that Harsa of Kashmir is referred to and not Harsavardhana of Kanauj. The chronology of the *Rajatarangini*, especially for Lohara period, has been correctly fixed and is proved by corroborative evidence. See Stein, *Rajat.*, vol. II, VIII.35. note.
65. *JRAS*, 1903, pp. 703-22. Dr. F. W. Thomas also ascribes it to King Harsa of Kashmir. Cf. Majumdar. R. C. (ed.), *The Struggle for Empire*, p.419.

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- 66 *Mitra, R. C, op. cit.*, p. 23.
- 67 *Rajat.*, VII. 1091-97.
- 68 *Majumdar. R. C. (ed.)*, p. 420.
69. Majumdar, R-C. (ed), *The Struggle for Empire*, p. 419.
70. *Rajat.*, VIII .246.
71. *Ibid.*, VIII.580.
72. *Rajat.*, VIII.2430-32, 3343-44, 3352-55.
73. *Majumdar, R. C. (ed.)*, op. clt, p. 420.
- 74 *Ep. Ind.*, vol. IX, p. 300; *Rajat.*, VII.1.672, 1586, 2196.; cf. Sahni, D.R., *Arch. Survey*, 1915-16, p. 58.
- 75 *Rajat* VIII.1184, 2234, 2574, 2402, 2410-17, 3316-18; Stein. *Rajat.*, vol. II, p. 474.
- 76 *Ep. Ind.*, vol. IX, p. 300; *Rajat.*, VIII.2066, 2092, 2097.
- 77 Stein, *Rajat.*, vol. I, p. 8. Vide *Rajat.*, III.4-7, 27ff, 255ff; V. 64, 119.
78. Stein, *Radjat*, vol. I, p. 7.
79. *Ibid*, p. 8; vide *Rajat.*, I.134; III.28; VIII.2574.
80. *Rajat.*, VIII.2234.
81. *Bodhisattvavadanakalpalata*, ed. Saratcandra Das and Ft. Hari Mohan Vidyabhushana, vol. I.
- 82 *Bodhisattva.*, Intro., Somendra, verses 5, 6, 10-16.
- 83 *Ibid.*, Prefatory note, pp. v, vi.
- 84 Keith, A. B., *History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 249.
- 85 *Bodhisattva.*, Prefatory note, p. iii.
- 86 Mitra, R.C, *op. cit.*, p.135; also see *JA*, 1892, p. 167.
- 87 Majumdar, R. C, (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 420.
- 88 Bhandarkar, R. G., *VSMRS*, p. 144.
- 89 Bhattacharya, H., *The Cultural Heritage of India*, vol. IV, p. 211; Woodroffe, J., *Tantraraja Tantra*, Preface, p. xvii.
- 90 Woodroffe, J., *sakti and Sakta*, p. 143.

- 91 *Ibid.* p. 144.
- 92 Bhattacharya, H., *loc. cit.*
- 93 *Ency. Rel. & Ethics*, vol. XII, pp. 192-93; Woodroffe, J., *Introduction*.
- 94 Comm. on *Manu.*, ch. II, v. I : *Srutisca dvividha vaidiki tantriki caiti*.
- 95 Bhattacharya, H., *op. cit.*, pp. 211-12.
- 96 *Ibid.*, p. 213.
- 97 Woodruff, J., *Tantraraja Tantra*, Preface, p. xx.
- 98 *Ency. Rel. & Ethics*, vol. XII, p. 193.
- 99 *Brhatsambhita*, part II, ch. II, v. 56.
- 100 Bhattacharya, H., *op. cit.*, p. 216.
- 101 *Ibid.*, p. 219.
- 102 *Ibid.*, p. 221.
- 103 Bhandarkar, R. G., *op. cit.*, p. 145. Vide *Saundaryalahari* with Laksmidhara's comm. (Mysore edition), V. 34.
- 104 Bhandarkar, R. G. *op. cit.*, p. 146; diksa see Pandil, M.P., *Studies In the Tantras and the Veda*, p. 53.
- 105 *Ibid.*
- 106 *Ibid.*, vide *Saundaryalahari*, V. 41 (Comm). For detailed description of *Sricakra*, see Woodroffe, J., *Tantraraja Tantra*, Intro., pp. 5-10.
- 107 Woodroffe, J., *op. cit.* Preface, p. xx.
- 108 Woodroffe, J., *Introduction to Tantrasastra*, p. 112. In ordinary parlance *mudra* means ritual gestures or positions of the body in worship and meditation with artificial aids (Hathayoga) but as one of the five elements it is parched cereal, and defined as *bhrstadanyadikam yadyad cavyaniyam pracaksate sa mudra kathia devi sarvesam naganandini* (Yogini Tantra, ch. VI). Cf. *Rajat.*, I. 367; II. 119; KSS, where parched grain is used at welcomes. Paddy, rice, wheat and gram generally are *mudra*. Woodroffe, J., *Introduction to Tantrasastra*, p. 116.
- 109 Pandey, K. C., *Abhinavagupta*, p. 614 (rev.ed.); Woodroffe, J., *Sakti and Sakta*, p. 120 (tr. of Winternitz's article).
- 110 Monier Williams, *Brahmanism and Hinduism*, p. 180ff.
- 111 Bhattacharya, H., *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 238.

112. Woodroffe, J., *Tantraraja Tantra*, Preface, p. viii.
113. Barth., *Rellgins of India*, pp, 205ff.
114. Stein, *Rajat*. Vol. I, 122, note.
115. Bhandarkar, R. G., *op. cit.* p. 144; for the sect of *kapalikas* and *kalamukhas*, see *ibid.*, p. 127.
116. *Rajat*, I. 348.
117. *ibid.* III.97; KSS. vol. IV, p. 225.
118. *Rajat*, V.55; cf. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, vol. I, pp. 144-48.
119. Bhattacharya, H., *op. cit.* vol. IV, p. 221; Bagchi, P.C., *Studies In the Tantras*, pp. 96ff.
120. *N.Mala.*, ch. II, vs. 100-116.
121. Pandey, K. C, *op. cit.* pp. 542ff. (rev.ed); Bhattacharya. H., *op.cit.*, vol. IV, p. 223.
122. *Rajat VII.* 277-78.
123. *Ibid*, VII. .279-84, For *mahasamaya*—a Tantric rite—see *Rajat*. VII, 523. St. Petersburg Sanskrit-Worterbuch, s.v *Samayacara*.
124. Barlh., *op. cit.*, p. 205.; *Supra*, p. 287.
125. *Rajat*, VII.281-84.126. *ibid.* I.348. III.99.
126. *Ibid*, I.348; III.99.
127. *N. Mala.*, ch. II, vs. 100-16; *Sam. Mat.* VI.25.
128. *Rajat* IV.88,112,114,124,686; V.239; VI.108-112, 121.
129. Yule, *Marco Polo*, vol. I, pp. 172, 175, note; vol. II, p. 41.
130. Bhattacharya, H., *op, cit.* vol. IV, p. 214.
131. Chatterji. J.C., *Kashmir Shaivaism* vol. I, p. 3; Bhandarkar, R.G., *op. cit.*, p. 76; Pandey, K.C., *Abhinawagupta*, Appendix A, p. 337. (rev. ed., p. 733); *Tantraloka*, vol. XII, *Ahnika* 37, pp. 404-5.
132. *Rajat*.V.124.
133. Chatterji, J. C, *Kashmir Shaivaism*, vol. II, p. I.
134. *Ibid*, vol. I. p. 15. The Trika is a spiritual philosophy, because its doctrines regarding Reality, the World, and Man are derived from a wealth of spiritual

experiences and are not constructions based upon an analysis of the ordinary experiences of man. (Bhattacharya, H., *op.cit.*, p.79).

135. Chatterji, J. C, *op. cit.*, p. 15
136. *Rajat.*, V-66.
137. Bulher, *Report*, pp.78ff.
138. *Sivasutravimarsini*, (Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies), vol. I, pp. 2-3.
139. Pandey, K. C, *Abhinavagupta*, p. 73f. (rev.ed. p.135f.).
140. Somananda, *Sivadrtii*, ed. Pt. Madhusudan Kaul, *Abnika* vii, vs. 107-20.
141. *Para. T.* pp. 280-81; Abhinavagupta, *Tantraloka*, vol. XII, *Ahnika* 37, vs. 37-39; Pandey. K. C., *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 5-6 (rev. ed).
142. *Rajat* VII.954; VIII.2364-65.
143. See *infra*, Appendix I, P. 311
144. *Malinivijayottara Tantra*, *adhikara* I, vs. 17-18: *tatresah sarvakrcchantah sarvajnah* sarvakrt prabhu sakalo niskal'o nantah saktirapyasya tadvidha.
145. *Ibid.*, *adhikara* III, v. 5 : *ya sa saktirjagaddhtuh kathita samavyini icchatvam tasya sa devi sirsksah pratipadyate.*
146. *Ibid.*, *adhikara* II, v. 29: *Saktisambhu* parijneyau varanane.
147. Das, S. K., *Sakti or Divine Power*, p. 63.
148. Barnett, P. Sara, Ed., & tr. In *JRAS*, 1910, p. 730, vs. 34-35.
149. *Ibid.*
150. Tarnett's explanation of verse 34 of *Sara* in *JRAS*, 1910, p. 730.
151. Jayaratha's *viveka.*, v. 106; vide Das. S. K., *sakti.*, p. 66; Appendix, p. 232.
152. Das, S. K., *sakti.*, p. 66.
153. *Ibid.*, p.67.
154. *Nilamata*. v. 237; *Rajat.*, I.72.
155. Das, S. K. *Sakti.* pp. 142-43, 264; Cf. Abhinavagupta, *Tantraloka*, vol. VI, *abnika* 9, vs. 149-50.
156. Somananda. *Sivadasti* ed. Pt. Madhusudan Kaul (Intro.), p. 1.
157. Pandey, K. C., *Abhirtavagupta*, pp. 172-73. (Rev. ed., pp. 298-99).
158. Bhandarkar, R. G., *op. dr.*, p. 129.

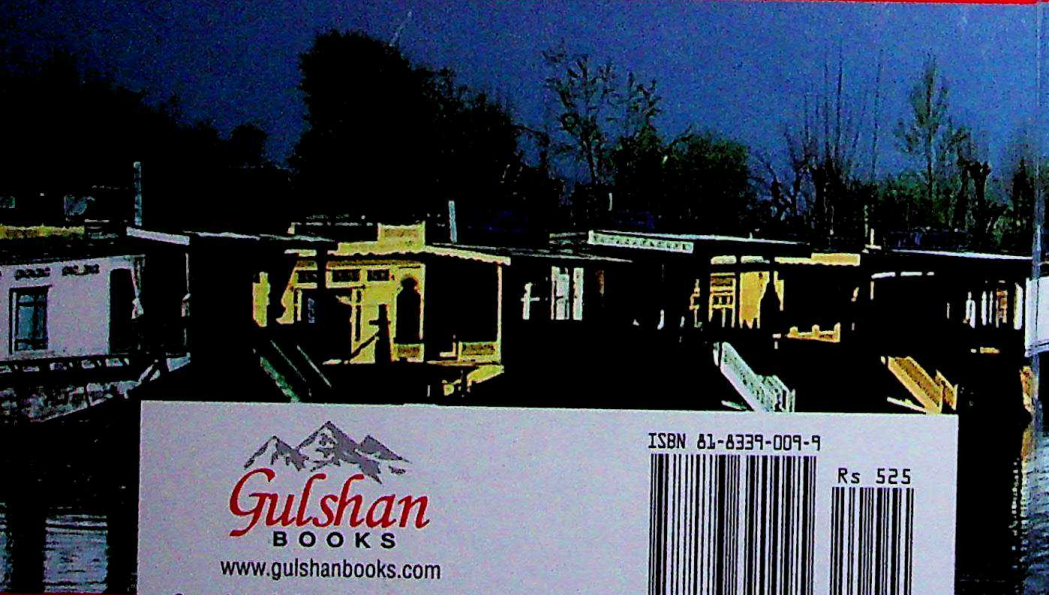
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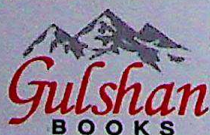
159. Bhandarkar, R. G., *op. cit.*, p. 33. See Suryakanta, *The Essence of vaisnavism IHQ*, 32, 1956, No. 4, pp. 359-67.
160. *Nilamata*, vs. 1069-1648.
161. Pandey, K. C., *Abhinavagupta*, pp. 55f., (p. 63, rev. ed.).
162. *Supra*, p. 72.
163. Ksemendra, *Dasavatara carita*, K. M. 26; see *Caru.*, v. 99 for Ksemendra's reverence for Visnu.
164. *See supra*, p. 272; *Nilamata*, vs. 684ff.
165. Abhinavagupta, *Tantraloka*, vol. I, pp. 162-63.
166. *Rajat.*, IV. 187 ff.
167. *JASB*, 1848, p. 266, plate XVI; cf. *Visnu Purana*, Part, II, ch. 11, vs. 8-11 (Gorakhpur ed.).
168. *Supra*, p. 85.

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